6

Uramikoi,Koi Uramikoi.

秋タカ

ウラミコイ、コイ
ウラミコイ。

片思い
上等です！

恨み来、恋、恨み恋。

恨み来、恋、恨み恋。

Uramikoi,Koi,Uramikoi.

秋タカ

CHAPTER 25: THE BIGGEST SLASHER IS ALWAYS THE ONE THAT GETS AWAY
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恨み来、恋、恨み恋。

前巻まで　透也の騒動が落ち着き、平和が戻った…はずが、鬼の出現、続く辻斬りで未だ荒れる十二町。
一方、朱華には夏歩が恨み猫だということがバレてしまい、二人はガチバトルに。
結果は引き分け、二人は恋のライバル宣言をする。

恨み来、恋、恨み恋。

ウラミコイ、コイ、ウラミコイ。

CHAPTER 25:
THE BIGGEST SLASHER IS ALWAYS THE ONE THAT GETS AWAY

HAH!

BUT!

YOU'RE FAST, SLASHER!

YOU'RE CONFUSED BY HOW HEAVY MY ATTACKS ARE, AREN'T YA!
THE MONKEY CLAN'S ABILITY LETS ME MAKE A CLONE. IT MIGHT BE SMALL, BUT IT PACKS A PUNCH...

IT'S TWO ON ONE!

OH.

I FORGOT ABOUT THE SIDEKICK.

HE WAS ABLE TO DODGE THAT...?
URGH!
HEY!

I GAVE HIM FIRST AID. THE AMBULANCE IS ON ITS WAY.

SACCHAN, HOW'S THAT GUY DOIN'?

...AND WHO ARE YOU CALLING A SIDE-KICK...?

OH, YA HEARD ME? SOWWY.

...

WE GOT YA CORNERED!

YA AIN'T GETTIN' OUTTA THIS ONE.

I'M TIRED OF WAITIN'!

COME ON!

WH-WHAT ARE YOU GOADING THE SLASHER FOR!?

IT'LL HURT A LOT LESS IF YA LET ME BE THE ONE TO TAKE YA DOWN.

LEMME SAY SOMETHIN' THOUGH. THAT PUP OVER THERE GETS REAL VIOLENT WHEN SHE'S MAD.

BRING IT...!

HE WENT AFTER HER BECAUSE HE KNOWS SHE'S HURT...

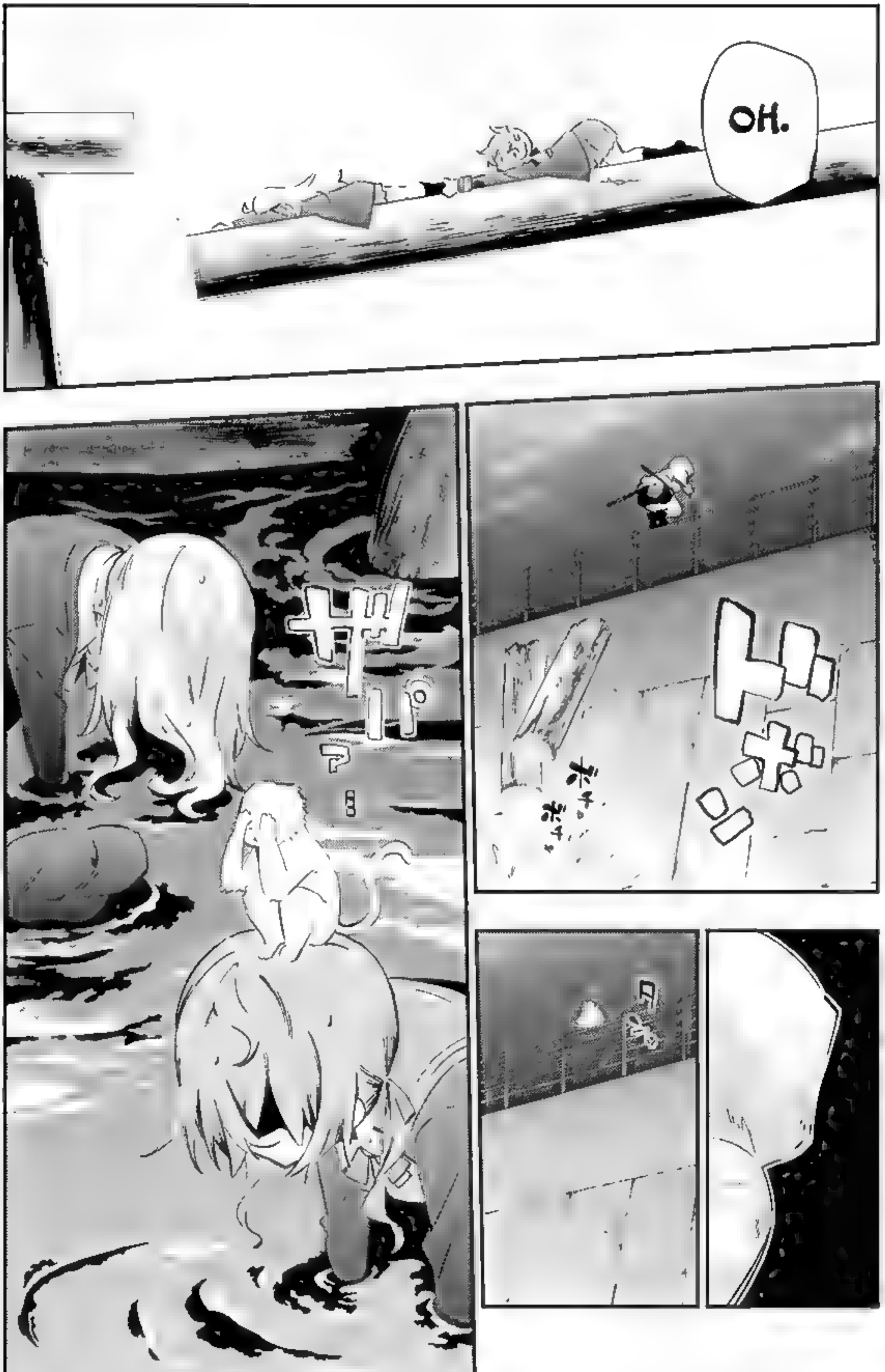
TCH!

YOU SCUM!

NO...!
HE'S ONLY PRE-TENDIN' TO RUN AWAY!!
IT'S FINE! I'LL DO IT...!
SACCHAN! STAY BACK! LET ME—

DOWN, PUP!!

PUP


OH.

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GIMME A BREAK ALREADY...

THE SLASHER GETS AWAY, AND CHIE IS JUST THE SAME AS ALWAYS...

THAT'S MY FRIEND'S...

UM— EXCUSE ME.

UH OH.

What's going on?

IS THIS PLACE OKAY, NATSUHO-CHAN?

WHAT HAPPENED?

TH-THANKS. YOU CAN LET ME DOWN...

SO WHAT DID YOU NEED FROM ME?

I... I SEE. THAT DOES SOUND LIKE TROUBLE...

WELL, BASICALLY, I WAS WAITING FOR YOU BY THE GATE, AND I FOUND A GREAT BOX, AND I JUMPED IN WITHOUT THINKING, AND NEXT THING I KNEW, I WAS SURROUNDED...

So cute!

So cute!

So cute!

THE STATE SHE WAS DISCOVERED IN

GREAT! I'M COUNTING ON YOU!

MI... MIYAKO-CHAN ASKED ME...

TO HELP YOU HUNT DOWN THE SLASHER.

SO I SAID I'LL BE FINE... WITHOUT HIM...

MY... FRIEND...

YOU'RE...

HE... HAS A FEVER...

BUT WHAT ABOUT KYOICHI-SENPAI?

WE DON'T NEED HER.

AND ALSO, SHE TOLD ME THAT SOMEONE FROM THE MONKEY CLAN IS HERE TOO...

HUH?

THUMP THUMP

FIDGET FIDGET

SO HE CAUGHT A COLD... IT *HAS* BEEN COLD LATELY. I HOPE HE GETS WELL SOON...

YEAH...

WE DON'T NEED HER.

SOUNDS LIKE YOU GUYS HAD IT ROUGH.

BUT THE NEKUNI HAVE BEEN WORKING ME TO THE BONE LATELY.

MAKE THIS, MAKE THAT. IT FEELS LIKE I'M A CORPORATE SLAVE.

WELL, WE COULD TAKE CARE OF THIS EASILY IF I JOINED YOU LIKE USUAL,

I'LL REPORT WHAT HAPPENED, SO YOU TWO KEEP WORKING HARD.

I HAD TO TAKE A BATH IN THE RIVER IN THE MIDDLE OF WINTER THANKS TO YOU!

YOU'RE THE ONE WHO'S DRAGGING ME DOWN!

I'M NOT WORKING TOO HARD!

IF YA SAY "WORK HARD," THIS STUPID DOG OVER HERE'S GONNA TRY TOO HARD AND HURT HERSELF EVEN MORE.

YA SHOULDN'T SAY THAT, TEACH.

YA GOT A NOSEBLEED? WERE YA THINKIN' OF SOMETHIN' NAUGHTY? OH MAN!

NN-NN-GH!

WELL I COULDN'T TRACK HIS SCENT BECAUSE YOU GAVE ME A NOSE-BLEED...

ARE YOU DONE?

OH, I GUESS NOT.

WE DIDN'T ASK YA...

There's a cute girl on the swimming team!

Hey, there's a girl in the basketball club.

In the track club. In the art club

MY SCHOOL LIFE WAS TERRIBLE THANKS TO THAT HORNY IDIOT...!

I'm not gonna cheat on Sen!

(They're not going out)

And he's still annoying!

I'VE KNOWN HIM SINCE WE WERE STUDENTS...

YOU REMIND ME OF A FRIEND I JUST CAN'T GET RID OF.

YADA YADA YADA

JUST BEARING WITH IT

USED TO IT

Sigh...

AND THE WORST PART IS THAT I LOVE THE DANGO FROM HIS SHOP. HE'S TAKEN MY STOMACH HOSTAGE AND NOW I CAN'T JUST CUT TIES WITH HIM. AND ON TOP OF THAT, HE HAS THE GALL TO RAISE THE PRICE. WHY DOESN'T THAT WORTHLESS IDIOT JUST TAKE A PAY CUT INSTEAD? UGH, JUST THINKING ABOUT IT MAKES ME MAD.

WHY SHOULD I HAVE TO WORK TOGETHER WITH SOMEONE I DON'T GET ALONG WITH?

HUH?

That'd be dangerous

BUT IF YOU'VE KNOWN EACH OTHER FOR SO LONG,

WHY DON'T YOU WORK TOGETHER WITH INOYAMA-SAN...?

WHAA-AAAT? SO BLUNT!!

I'D RATHER DIE THAN WORK TOGETHER WITH THAT IDIOT.

ALRIGHT! LET'S FOLLOW OUR PREDE-CESSOR'S LEAD!

DIS-MISSED!

WHAT!?

YOU WERE NEVER THAT GOOD AT FIGHTING TO BEGIN WITH, SO YOU SHOULDN'T FORCE YOURSELF AND TAG ALONG WITH ME...

HAH! YA KIDDIN', RIGHT?

I'D DIE IF I HAD TO WALK THE PUPPY WHILE HUNTIN' THE SLASHER AT THE SAME TIME!

I'D DIE TOO IF I HAD TO MONKEY AROUND WHILE FIGHTING!

NNNNGH...

BANG

SEE YA!

JUST GO HOME AND GNAW ON A BONE OR SOMETHIN', PUP!

はは はは

ALRIGHT, THEN WE'RE GOIN' OUR SEPARATE WAYS!

I'VE NEVER SEEN SANA-CHAN THIS MAD BEFORE...

O... OKAY.

SO,

WE'RE GONNA TAKE DOWN THE SLASHER OURSELVES!

BUT AFTER HE CUTS DOWN SOMEONE, HE JUST RUNS AWAY WITHOUT KILLING THEM.

FIRST, LET ME EXPLAIN THE SLASHER. HE SEEMS TO JUST ATTACK RANDOMLY.

BUT NOW, ALL OF A SUDDEN, WE'VE HAD SIX OR SEVEN VICTIMS IN LESS THAN TEN DAYS.

IT WASN'T REALLY A MAJOR CONCERN BEFORE, SINCE IT ONLY HAPPENED ONCE EVERY COUPLE OF MONTHS OR SO.

THIS ACTJALLY ISN'T THE FIRST TIME WE'VE HAD SOMEONE ATTACKING PEOPLE WITH A SWORD BEFORE.

WE DON'T KNOW, BUT SOMETHING CHANGED AFTER THE WEASEL INCIDENT.

DOES IT HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE WEASEL...?

AND ANOTHER STRANGE THING IS THE VICTIMS.

...COULD IT BE INTEN-TIONAL?

THEY'RE ALL DISTANT RELATIVES, THOUGH.

MONKEY, DRAGON, AND SHEEP...? AND THE OTHER VICTIMS... THEY'RE ALL RELATED TO THE TWELVE CLANS.

NO...

...AND YOU KNOW WHAT ELSE IS WEIRD ABOUT THE SLASHER THIS TIME?

EVERY INCIDENT HAS BEEN AT A CROSSROAD WHERE TWO PATHS MEET.

IT'S ALWAYS AT A CROSS-ROAD.

IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES, THEY SAY THAT DEMONS APPEAR AT CROSSROADS, TOO.

SPIRITUAL ENERGY GATHERS MORE EASILY.

AT CROSS-ROADS,

THIS IS WHAT MISTER ROOSTER TOLD ME...

THIS ALL SEEMS INTEN-TIONAL.

WORRIES ME EVEN MORE THAN THE OGRES DO.

THAT'S WHY THIS SLASHER...

MAYBE IT'S SOME KIND OF A RITUAL...

I HAVE A BAD FEELING ABOUT THIS.

SOMEONE MUST BE SCHEMING SOMETHING...

CAN I TAKE THE FOOD TO HIM..?

BUT WHAT'S WORRISOME IS THAT HE HASN'T EATEN ANYTHING TODAY...

IT SEEMS IT CAME DOWN A LITTLE...

BY THE WAY, HOW IS MY BROTHER DOING? HOW IS HIS FEVER?

!

UH— UM...

SEN?

SATO WILL BRING HIM SOMETHING TO EAT LATER.

DID IT COME FROM SOME-WHERE OUT-SIDE?

…

I'M NOT LYING!

REALLY? I'VE NEVER SEEN A RAT IN THIS HOUSE BEFORE.

I JUST SAW A HUGE RAT!

WHAT'S WRONG?

WHAT!?

BIG BROTHER!

120

NOPE.

I KNOW YOU CAN'T, BROTHER.

SO LET ME HELP YOU.

'KAY?

AND SO,

I CAME TO FEED YOU!

AND WHO'S THE ONE WHO SAID THAT EARLIER, YET DIDN'T EAT BREAKFAST OR LUNCH?

It's super embarrassing

I'LL EAT ON MY OWN WHEN I CAN MOVE...

...

MY...

I'LL... EAT BY...

IT'S FINE...

DON'T PUSH YOUR-SELF.

THE SOUND OF RATS

SCURRYING AROUND EVERY-WHERE...

SUCH NUISANCES.

THEY MUST BE INFESTED WITH FILTHY RATS.

THE NEKUNI TERRITORIES ARE FULL OF USELESS BUM COUNTRY BUILDINGS.

AND PESTS SHOULD BE EXTERMINATED.

恨み来、恋、恨み恋。

ウラミコイ　コイ　ウラミコイ

.....

CHAPTER 26:
EVEN THE CAT WOULD NOT INTERFERE IN A FIGHT BETWEEN A DOG AND A MONKEY

THE NEXT DAY

AS IF. WHY SHOULD I GO?

So stupid

YOU'LL NEVER BECOME THE HEAD OF THE MONKEY CLAN IF THAT'S ALL YOU CAN DO.

COME ON, STAND UP.

...GOT IT.

WE WILL RESUME TRAINING AS SOON AS SCHOOL IS OVER TOMORROW. UNDERSTOOD?

CHIE-CHAN! CHIE-CHAN! HEEEY!

I GOT MY BRAIN, AND THAT'S GOOD ENOUGH FOR ME.

EVERYONE'S GOOD AT SOME THINGS AND NOT GOOD AT OTHER THINGS.

EVERYONE'S GOOD AT SOME THINGS AND NOT GOOD AT OTHER THINGS, YA WASTIN' YA TIME...

12

WAIT, LEMME TAKE THAT BACK. YA AIN'T GONNA SCORE MORE THAN 40 NO MATTER HOW HARD YA TRY. YA NEVER GONNA CATCH UP TO MY AVERAGE OF 90.

OH? YOU GOT YOUR TEST BACK, DIDN'T YA?. FINALLY SCORE MORE THAN 30 POINTS?

SEE! AN 80! ALL MY HARD WORK PAID OFF!

80

CHIE?

CHIE? ARE YOU OKAY?

...HM?

G-I

IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE I GET A BETTER SCORE THAN YOU!

SANA-CHAN, WHERE ARE WE HEADED?

RAT
OX
TIGER
RABBIT
DRAG
SNAKE
ORSE
RooSTER
MoNKEY
DOG
PIG

SOUTHEAST OF HERE,

NEAR THE CENTER OF THE TWELVE CITY. THE SLASHER INCIDENTS...

HAVE MOSTLY BEEN CONCENTRATED IN THAT AREA.

GROPE MY CHEST...!?

SHE'S BASICALLY THE EVIL INCARNATE PERVERTED MONKEY, AND SHE MIGHT EVEN GROPE YOUR CHEST!

AND ALSO, WE MIGHT RUN INTO A CERTAIN SOMEONE FROM THE MONKEY CLAN, SO PLEASE BE CAREFUL.

WH... WHY...?

WH... WHY ARE YOU ALWAYS WITH HER IF SHE'S EVIL INCARNATE...?

B... BUT SHE'S YOUR FRIEND, RIGHT...?

UM... I GUESS WE'VE JUST KNOWN EACH OTHER FOR SO LONG...? WE ARGUE ALL THE TIME, AND...

I'M ACTUALLY JEALOUS.

YOU CAN SPEAK YOUR MINDS WITH EACH OTHER WHILE STILL BEING FRIENDS... I THINK YOU MUST REALLY LIKE EACH OTHER.

THAT... KAPPA BOY...?

鮮魚

N-NO... YOU'RE...

OH!

THAT'S ME!

UH... HUH?

My ears came out.

Y-

YOU'RE..

THE AWESOME CAT GIRL!

I'M REALLY GOOD AT SEEING WHICH FISH ARE GOOD.

YOU'RE SO YOUNG AND YOU'RE ALREADY WORKING... THAT'S AMAZING...

Oh, really?

Hey aunties, that fish's no good

WORKING. GOTTA WORK FOR FOOD, YOU KNOW?

WH... WHAT ARE YOU... DOING?

FORTUNE-GENERATING DEVICE

Hana just has to stay home, she's so lucky.

LEFTOVER FISH

ALL THE WOMEN ARE REALLY SCARED. THEY'RE ALL TALKING ABOUT IT.

THEY SAY THEY DON'T WANNA GO NEAR CROSS-ROADS AT NIGHT BECAUSE OF HIM.

AND...

SCARED...?

HE'S GOT EVERYONE SCARED TO DEATH. HOPE YOU FIND HIM SOON.

SO YOU'RE GOING AFTER THE SLASHER, HUH?

おぉ!

THAT THE HEAD OF THE CITY ISN'T DOING ANYTHING, LETTING THIS SLASHER ROAM FREE.

"WISH WE STILL HAD GOICHI" AND STUFF LIKE THAT.

OH,

Y... YEAH...

THE CITY'S ANXIOUS AND BLAMING THE NEKUNI CLAN...

OH, BUT DON'T TELL KYOICHI, OBVIOUSLY.

NATSUHO-CHAN?

NATSU-HO-CHAN, WE SHOULD GET...

WE HAVE TO FIND THE SLASHER SOON..!

MIYA, I'M GOING TO TELL YOU ALL THIS SO YOU'RE PREPARED.

HE COMPLAINS NONSTOP, BUT YOU CAN MAKE HIM DO WHATEVER YOU WANT AS LONG AS YOU PAY HIM OFF.

YOU MEAN... LIKE MISTER ROOSER...?

THERE ARE THREE OF THEM.

THE TWELVE CLANS AREN'T ONE BIG HAPPY FAMILY.

DON'T LET YOUR GUARD DOWN AGAINST THE CLANS THAT AREN'T WELL-DISPOSED TOWARD THE NEKUNI CLAN.

MIYAKO-SAMA, YOU HAVE A VISITOR.

AND THE LAST TROUBLE-SOME FAMILY IS THE...

THE HORSE IS A HEAD CASE.

BE WARY OF THE TIGER.

OH MY.

THE NEW HEAD IS SO ADORABLE!

TONOGAKE-SAN.

THE PLEASURE IS MINE,

FUFUFU, PLEASE DON'T LOOK AT ME LIKE I'M A VILLAIN.

I'M ACTUALLY HERE TO TALK ABOUT SOMETHING I'M SURE YOU'LL BE GLAD TO HEAR.

KIYOHA TONOGAKE

SANA-CHAN,

IT'S A HOODED PERSON WITH TWO SWORDS, RIGHT...!?

THAT'S THE SLASHER!

YES!

SLASH!

SLASHER! YOU'RE NOT GETTING AWAY THIS TI...

I KNEW HE'D SHOW UP AT A QUIET CROSSROADS. HE TRIED TO RUN AWAY, BUT WE'VE FINALLY GOT HIM TRAPPED ON THIS BRIDGE...!

WAH!

I'LL DIE IF I LET MY GUARD DOWN!

HE'S SERIOUS...

BUT THERE ARE TWO OF US.

I CAN'T USE MY SUPPRESSION TECHNIQUES AGAINST NON-YOKAI.

HE DOESN'T SMELL LIKE A YOKAI.
HE REALLY IS SKILLED...!

IF WE CAN KEEP PRESSURING HIM...!!

HE FELL...?

WHAT?

HE WAS DEFINITELY UNDER THE BRIDGE JUST NOW. HOW DID HE GET BEHIND US SO FAST!?

!?!

BEHIND YOU!

H— HOLD IT!

A!!

A!!

A!!

WHAT?

WH—

HE DISAP-PEARED?

ズル

ズル

...DID HE GET AWAY...?

HE JUST KEEPS SHOWING UP OUT OF NOWHERE. I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON.

YEAH...

SOME-THING'S STRANGE.

I CAN STILL FAINTLY SENSE HIS PRESENCE.

...?

I DON'T KNOW EXACTLY WHERE, BUT...

NO, HE'S STILL HERE.

BUT HOW!?

UP THERE!!

NEE-DLES!?

NATSUHO-CHAN! DODGE—

TRANQUILIZER DARTS...! NO...!

HUH?

!

!!

HIS PRESENCE DEFINITELY DISAPPEARED.

BUT THEN HE APPEARED SOME-WHERE, ELSE...!? COULD HE BE...

KYAH!

MY INJURED BACK....!

THIS PERSON KNOWS ME...!

...!!

AND I KNOW

THIS PERSON'S ABILITY!

HE RAN TO THE BRIDGE BECAUSE HE WANTED TO PICK HIS OWN BATTLEGROUND AND DIDN'T WANT US TO REALIZE WHAT HIS ABILITY WAS RIGHT AWAY...!

HE'S FROM ONE OF THE TWELVE CLANS!

WHY DO WE ALWAYS END UP FIGHTING?

WHILE SHE WAS JUST WORRIED FOR ME, ESPECIALLY SINCE I WAS ALREADY HURT.

I'M A FOOL. I WAS STUBBORN AND DIDN'T WANT TO LOSE TO CHIE...

I SHOULD'VE APOLOGI—

CHIE...!

NOT EVEN MONKEYS PICK ON PUPPIES, MISTER SLASHER.

HOW SAVAGE.

WHAT'S GOIN' ON HERE?

HE DISAP-
PEARED...!
STOP
TALKING
AND BE
CAREFJL!

HIS
ABILITY
IS...!

I
GOT
IT.

YA GOT
LUCKY,
SANA-
CHAN.

HOLD UP.
DON'T GET
ME WRONG.
I JUST
HAPPENED
TO SHOW
UP AT
THE RIGHT
TIME.

HO.

I WATCHED YA FIGHT.

I THINK I GOT A PRETTY GOOD IDEA OF WHAT'S GOIN' ON.

WHA... BUT HOW?

I GOT A HIDDEN TRICK UP MY SLEEVE.

A HIDDEN TRICK...?

HOW'S THIS!!

THEN THE SLASHER'S ABILITY REALLY IS THAT CLAN'S...!

SHE'S KEEPING TRACK OF THE ENEMY USING HER CLONE'S PRESENCE...!

I SEE! THE CLONE...!

WAH!

NGH!

NATSUHO-CHAN WAS ABLE TO TRACK HIS MOVEMENT WITH HER SIXTH SENSE.

THE ABILITY THAT ALLOWS THE USER TO TELEPORT FROM ONE LOCATION TO ANOTHER BY TRAVELING THE VOID OF THIS WORLD.

MY CLONE'S TIED UP KEEPIN' TRACK OF HIM, I'M BEING—

HE STOPPED RESORTIN' TO HIS TRICKS!

SAVE THE TALK FOR LATER! TAKE HIM DOWN!

SA...

MY SUPPRESSION RITUAL TECHNIQUES ARE ONLY EFFECTIVE AGAINST YOKAI AND HAVE NO EFFECT AGAINST ORDINARY HUMAN BEINGS!

YA DON'T HAVE TO TELL ME TWICE!

BUT IF IT'S AGAINST A PERSON WITH DIVINE ABILITIES SIMILAR TO YOKAI...!

IT WON'T BE AS EFFECTIVE, BUT IT'LL BE GOOD ENOUGH TO STOP HIM IN HIS TRACKS FOR A MOMENT...!

IS ALL WE NEED!!

AND THAT ONE MOMENT

AAA-AAA-AAH!!

CRUSHER FANG STRIKE!!

I WON'T LOSE TO YOU, SANA-CHAN!!

CHIE!

NOT TOO SHABBY FOR SOMEONE WITH A BJM BACK!

BLAST

MONKEY

STAFF!!!

I WON'T LOSE TO YA EITHER...!!

LET'S GO!!

ULTIMATE TECHNIQUE!

MIKICHI!!

BUT SOMEONE WITH EVEN LESS TALENT WORKED HARD, PROVED ME WRONG, AND RUBBED IT IN MY FACE.

SEE, AN 80% ALL MY HARD WORK PAID OFF!

HEH. I ALREADY KNEW I D DN'T HAVE ANY SPECIAL TALENT FOR IT.

I D DN'T EXPECT YOU TO LEARN THE MONKEY STAFF, ESPECIALLY SINCE YOU DIDN'T SEEM DISPOSED TO IT...

WELL DONE!

I'M NOT GONNA LOSE.

ALRIGHTY, HERE'S THE FUN PART.

LET'S SEE HIS UGLY MUG.

Why did my dog ears pop out when I used my ritual tags ?

YES, YES.

I'M GETTIN' THE FIRST LOOK.

OH, SINCE I WAS THE ONE WHO TOOK HIM DOWN,

* BECAUSE SHE USED HER ABILITY

WAS THAT FEELING I GOT WRONG...?

...IS JUST AN ORDINARY ONE.

THE SLASHER'S SWORD...

NATSUHO-CHAN! IT'S ALL OVER!

...HEY, SANA-CHAN...

I KNEW IT...

...

LOOK.

WE KNOW WHO THIS IS.

LET'S...

LEAVE THE REST TO TORIDERA-SENSEI.

...SORRY, I WAS JUST ASLEEP THE ENTIRE FIGHT...

NAH, DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT. SENSEI'S TAKIN' THE SLASHER AWAY, IT'S ALL GOOD.

CHIE'S ALWAYS BEEN GOOD AT MAKING NEW FRIENDS...

I DIDN'T THINK THEY'D GET ALONG SO FAST...

WOW!

IS THIS YOUR FIRST TIME AT A CONVENIENCE STORE?

I CAN'T BELIEVE IT...!

WHAT? THAT'S AMAZING!

CONVENIENCE STORE CHAINS ARE ALL CONNECTED TO A HUGE FACTORY UNDERGROUND...

DID YOU KNOW?

HMM?

I'D BE FINE WITH IT IF THE REST OF YOU MELTED, TOO.

YOU'RE MELTING MY HEART!

AHAHA-HA-HAH! YOU'RE SO INNOCENT, NATSUHO-CHAN!

They're not?

MGR-GRGR-GR...

WELL, I GUESS I DID JUST STEP IN AND TAKE ALL THE GLORY FROM YA. WHAT ARE YA EVEN GOOD FOR?

YA STILL MAD?

...

YA SHOULD BE THANKIN' MIKICHI AND ME.

YA SURE GOT LUCKY THAT I FOUND YA BEFORE IT WAS TOO LATE!

UM...

WELL...

HM? WHAT ARE YA FIDGETING FOR? IF YA GOT SOMETHIN' TO SAY, YOU SHOULD SAY IT OR OTHERWISE YA'LL END UP REGRETTIN' IT.

UM...

WHY DO WE ALWAYS END UP FIGHTING!?

...I ACTUALLY WANTED TO THANK HER...

WHA-

WH-WH-
WH-WH-
WHA-

HACK-

GAH!

...I WAS GOING TO ASK, WEREN'T YOU FOLLOWING SANA-CHAN BECAUSE YOU WERE WORRIED ABOUT HER...?

HAHA, THAT'S RIDICU-

I FELT SOMEONE TAILING US...

BUT IT DIDN'T FEEL MALICIOUS, SO I DIDN'T BOTHER WITH IT.

I JUST...

AND TAKE PICTURES OF HER PATHETIC FACE...

GAZE OF PURE INNOCENCE

I JUST WANTED TO TELL SANA-CHAN HOW USELESS SHE WAS WHEN SHE MESSED UP!

NAH! SERIOUSLY!

SHE'S SERIOUSLY MELTING MY HEART...

AAA... AAAAAAH! N... NOO... HER RADIANCE IS SWALLOWING ME WHOLE...

&yeeeeehh (screaming internally)

OR ELSE YOU'LL END UP REGRET-TING IT...

...BUT YOU SAID IT YOURSELF, IF YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY, YOU SHOULD SAY IT...

I'M SORRY, CHIE.

WH... WHAT? WHAT IS GOING ON? DID SHE ALREADY GET SANA-CHAN'S HEART, TOO...?

BUT...

WE'RE ALWAYS FIGHTING,

YOU WERE... JUST WORRIED FOR ME BECAUSE I WAS HURT, RIGHT...?

I DON'T HATE BEING WITH YOU...

I ALWAYS SAY STUFF TO YA, TOO...

...I KNOW.

...SORRY.

I DON'T DISLIKE BEING WITH YOU EITHER...

AAAA-AAH-HH....

...AA-AA...

CHIE!?

AAAAA-GAGA-GAG-GAGAA AAAH!

AGH...

DON'T FORGET THAT.

KYA-AAA-AAH!

IT'S ALL YER FAULT!!

UWE-EEE-HHH!?

AND WHILE I'M AT IT, YOU TOO!

OH...

THIS ISN'T ME! THIS ISN'T MEEEEE!

NO! NO! NO!!

LOST IN WHAT!?

SPEECHLESS

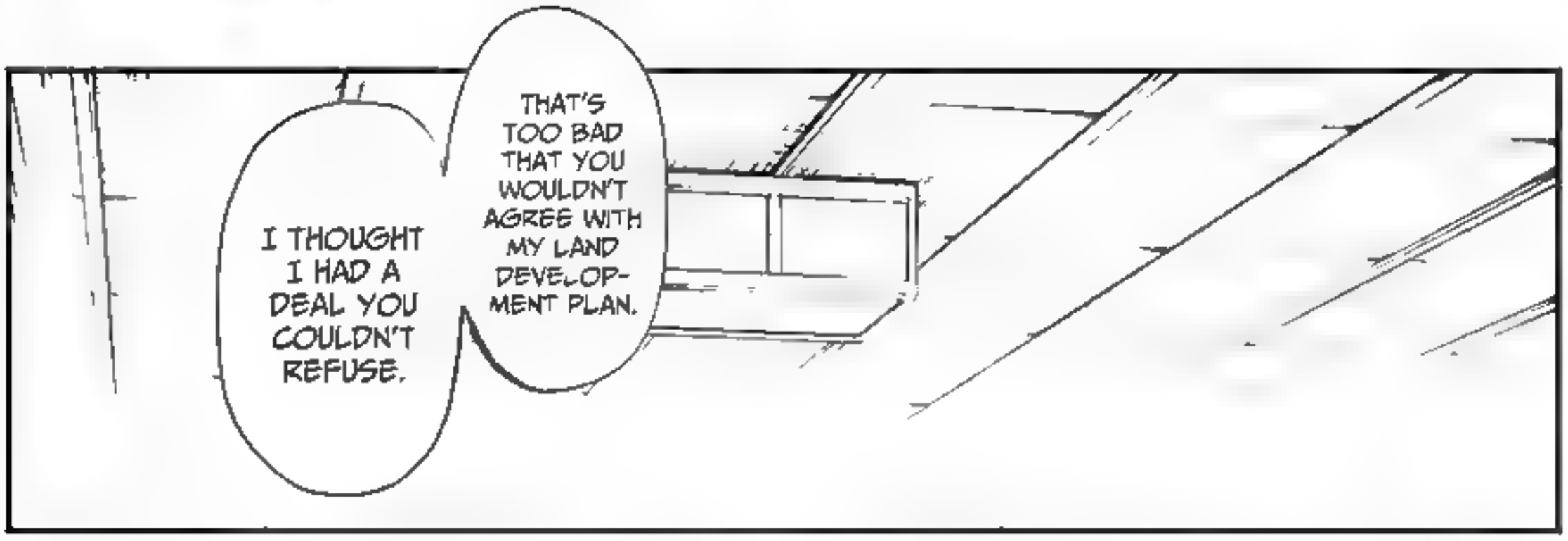
YOU LOST, SANA-CHAN...

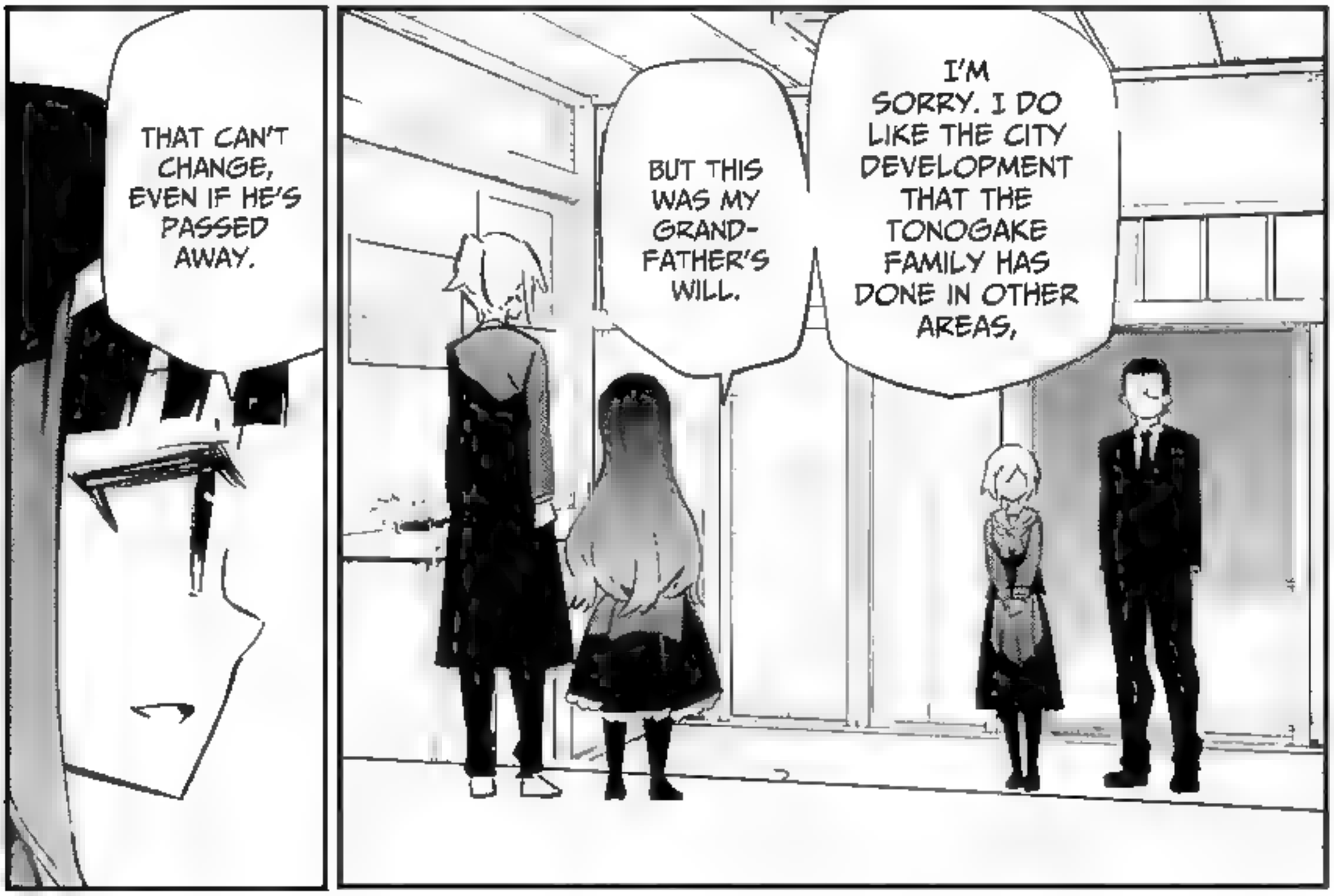
SORRY... I DIDN'T MEAN TO...

IT REALLY IS NICE TO HAVE FRIENDS THAT YOU CAN SPEAK YOUR HEART TO

THEY CAN BE HONEST WITH EACH OTHER, TOO.

AYAKA-CHAN AND THAT TIGER GIRL...


I THOUGHT I HAD A DEAL YOU COULDN'T REFUSE.
THAT'S TOO BAD THAT YOU WOULDN'T AGREE WITH MY LAND DEVELOP-MENT PLAN.


THAT CAN'T CHANGE, EVEN IF HE'S PASSED AWAY.
BUT THIS WAS MY GRAND-FATHER'S WILL.
I'M SORRY. I DO LIKE THE CITY DEVELOPMENT THAT THE TONOGAKE FAMILY HAS DONE IN OTHER AREAS,

BUT DID YOU KNOW?

I SEE. I SUPPOSE OUR D.F-FERENCES IN OPINION CAN'T BE RECON-CILED.

AND I'M THE TYPE TO NOT TRUST ANYONE UNTIL THEY'VE EARNED IT.

RABBITS CAN DIE OF LONELINESS.

YOU KNOW THAT THE TONOGAKE FAMILY BECAME ISOLATED FROM THE REST OF THE TWELVE CLANS,

AND CAN'T INTERACT WITH OTHERS ANYMORE,

ALL THANKS TO A CERTAIN CLAN, RIGHT?

NO.

I HAD NO IDEA.

I'M SORRY.

BY THE WAY,

THAT SLASHER THAT'S WANDERING OUT THERE SURE IS SCARY, ISN'T HE?

WELL,

IF YOU DIDN'T KNOW, THEN I GUESS THERE WAS NOTHING THAT COULD'VE BEEN DONE

BUT WHAT ABOUT YOUR BROTHER?

YOU GET BODYGUARDS SINCE YOU'RE THE HEAD, SO YOU'LL BE FINE.

DID YOU KNOW? HE'S ONLY TARGETING PEOPLE RELATED TO THE TWELVE CLANS.

DO YOU THINK HE CAN GET AWAY WITH

"OOPS, SORRY, I DIDN'T KNOW?"

LET'S TALK AGAIN SOME TIME!

I'LL BE TAKING MY LEAVE NOW.

MIYAKO-SAMA,

WE JUST RECEIVED A MESSAGE FROM SANA.

SPREAD THE SALT, SATO.

BUT SERIOUSLY...

NOT AS MUCH AS THE PREVIOUS DICTATOR, THOUGH.

THAT MIDGET DIDN'T BITE ON THE PROPOSAL TRAP. SO SHE'S GOT A BIT OF A BRAIN AFTER ALL.

I THINK HAVING SOMEONE FINALLY DIE FROM IT WOULD MAKE THE RUMORS THAT MUCH MORE FRIGHTENING.

AND WOULD THAT BRAT BE ABLE TO BE A COMPETENT HEAD AFTER SHE LOSES HER LAST RELATIVE?

WOULD SHE BE ABLE TO REPLACE THAT DICTATOR LIKE THAT?

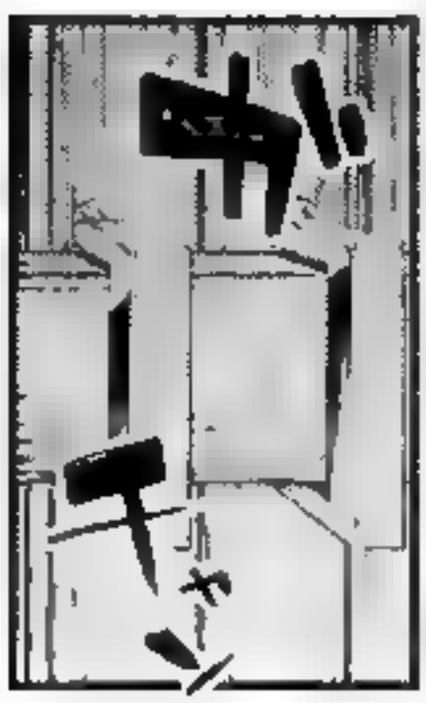
SHOULD I ACTUALLY HAVE SOMEONE CUT DOWN THAT WORTHLESS BROTHER OF HERS?

OH!

YES!

EHHEEH! SHOULD I DO IT?

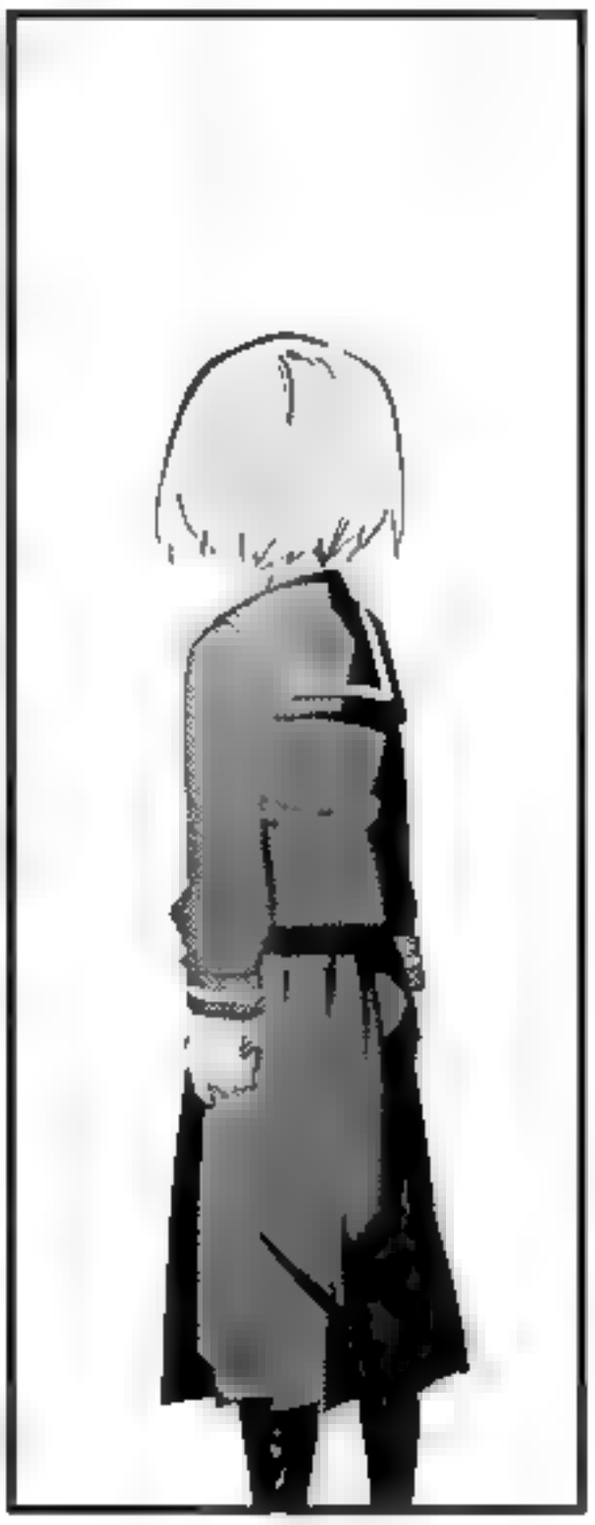
'SCUSE ME. COMING THROUGH...
MOODKILL
AAAAH, I'M GETTING EXCI—
IT'S HER FAULT FOR MAKING ME ANGRY.



UGH, SHE HEARD ME!? DAMN IT, I GOT TOO EXCITED...

MMM, NOT EXACTLY.

WHAT'S GOING ON?
DID I FORGET SOME-THING?



YOU DIDN'T FORGET ANYTHING,

BUT YOU DID MISPLACE SOMETHING VERY PRECIOUS TO YOU.

恨み来、恋、恨み恋。

ウラミコイ　コイ、ウラミコイ

恨み恋、恋恨み。

CHAPTER 27
HE WHO CHASES TWO RABBITS AT THE SAME TIME CATCHES NEITHER

秋タカ

ナ！？
ナ…
ナ…

IF IT WERE THE GIRL, I COULD HAVE AT LEAST GOTTEN A NICE VIEW AND FELT MOTIVATED...
SHEESH. NOTHING BUT TROUBLE LATELY.

CHAPTER 27
HE WHO CHASES TWO RABBITS AT THE SAME TIME CATCHES NEITHER

BUT IT'S THE YOUNGER BROTHER.

TWIN HEADS OF THE TONOGAKE FAMILY

MASAKI TONOGAKE

KIYOHA TONOGAKE

YES.
THE SLASHER
WAS A
TONOGAKE...!

TONO-
GAKE?

THE
YOUNGER
BROTHER
OF THE
TWIN HEADS.

OF
COURSE!
I WOULDN'T
LET YOU
DOWN AS
A HEAD,
SISTER! IT'S
A DUTY YOU
ENTRUSTED
ME WITH!

THAT'LL
HELP US
TREMENDOUSLY.
GOOD WORK,
ESPECIALLY
WITH YOUR
INJURIES.

TONOGAKE..!

PLEASE WORK HARD ON YOUR DUTIES AS WELL!

DON'T WORRY ABOUT THE CLAN, I'VE GOT IT!

YES.

THANKS, SANA.

HMM...
LET'S NOT PLAY AROUND, AND JUST GET STRAIGHT TO THE POINT.
AND WHAT MIGHT THAT BE?
I MISPLACED SOMETHING?

CAUGHT? HIM?

...!?

WE CAUGHT THE SLASHER, OR SHOULD I SAY, YOUR BROTHER?

...NO.

IS SHE BLUFFING?

BUT HIS SWORD SKILLS ARE TOP-CLASS. HE SHOULDN'T LOSE IN ANY ONE-ON-ONE FIGHT...!

HE'S DUMBER THAN ME AND STILL A VIRGIN,

TORIDERA-SAN HAS HIM.

THE ONES WHO CAUGHT HIM WERE FROM THE TWELVE CLANS, TOO. YOU'RE NOT GETTING OUT OF THIS.

WHERE IS MY BROTHER?

TORI-DERA...?

IT'LL WORK OUT.

TORIDERA, YOU SAY?

THEN...

FU...

UFUFU-FUH...

THE STONE CHANGED...!?
BUT HOW...
SATO...!

IF YOU DON'T WANT HER CRUSHED, DON'T MOVE.

ビキッ

ビキッ…

ビキッ

WELL, TORIDERA'S TECHNICALLY NEUTRAL, SO HE'LL DO WHATEVER YOU WANT HIM TO AS LONG AS YOU PAY HIM.

...WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?

A YOKAI...!?

SO I FIGURED I'D KILL BEFORE I'M KILLED MYSELF.

YOU DARE TO ORDER ME? DO YOU EVEN UNDERSTAND YOUR SITUATION RIGHT NOW?

HAA-AAH?

SHE'S JUST A HOUSE SERVANT. LET HER GO.

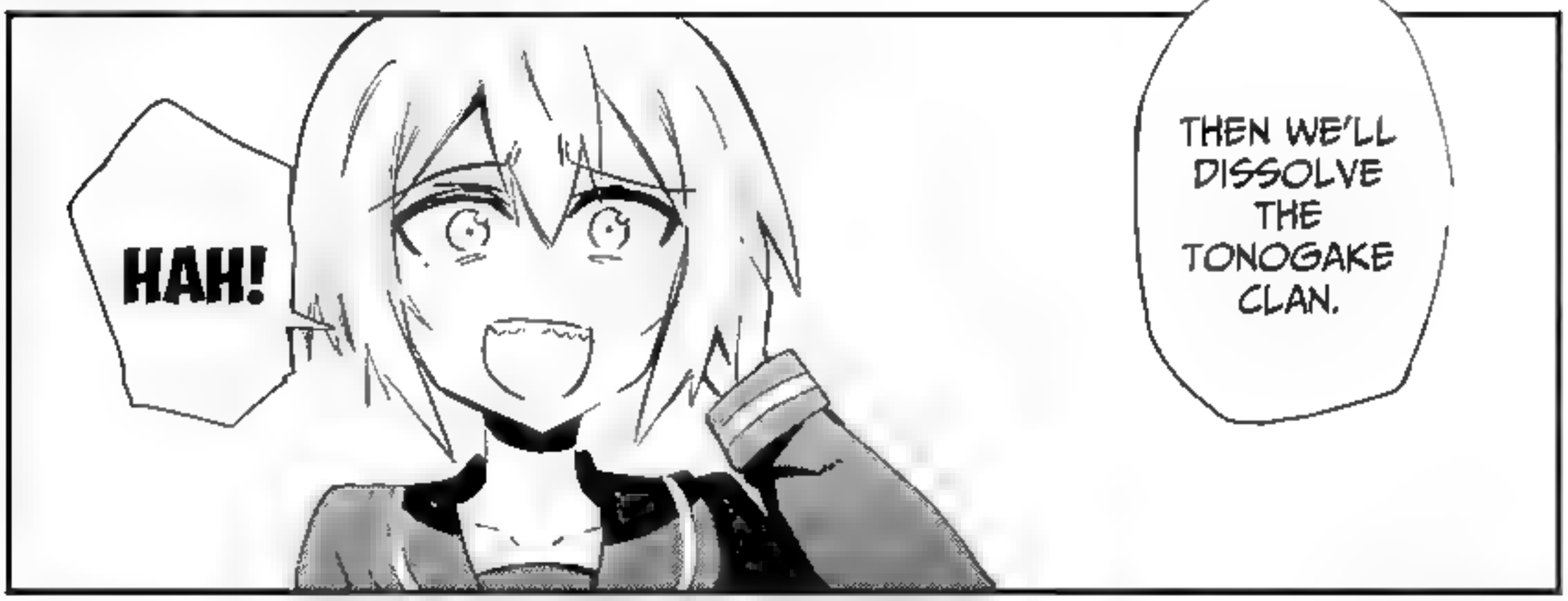
WHO CARES WHAT MY MOTIVES ARE? WHAT'S LEFT TO DO NOW OTHER THAN FIGHT?

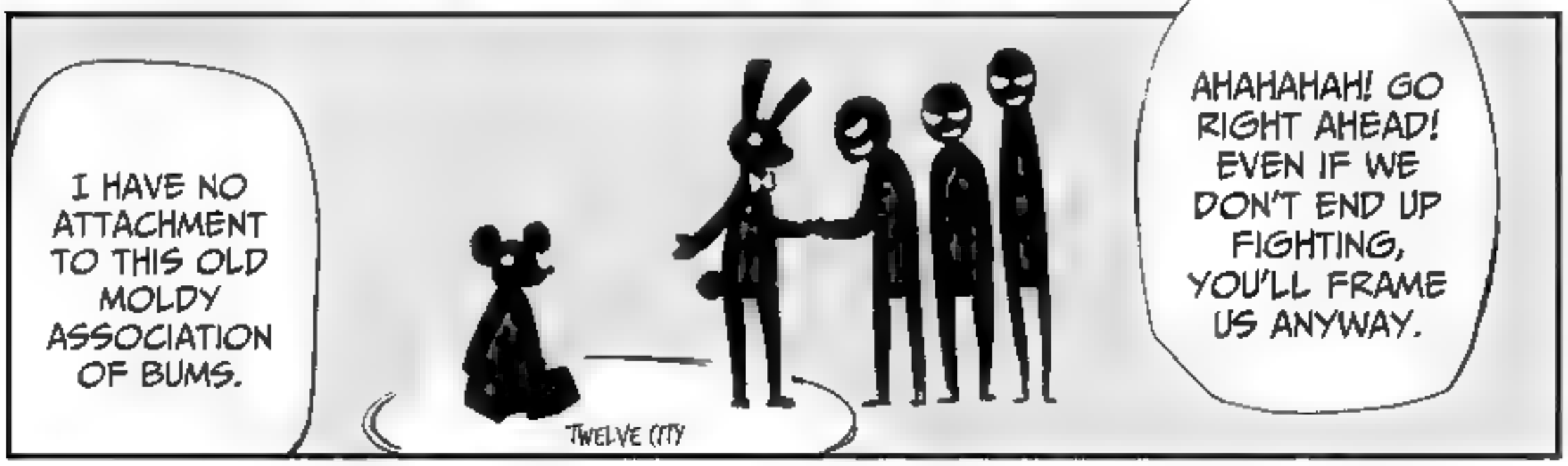
WHO KNOWS?

...DID YOU CAUSE THE SLASHER INCIDENTS BECAUSE YOU WERE UNHAPPY WITH THAT?

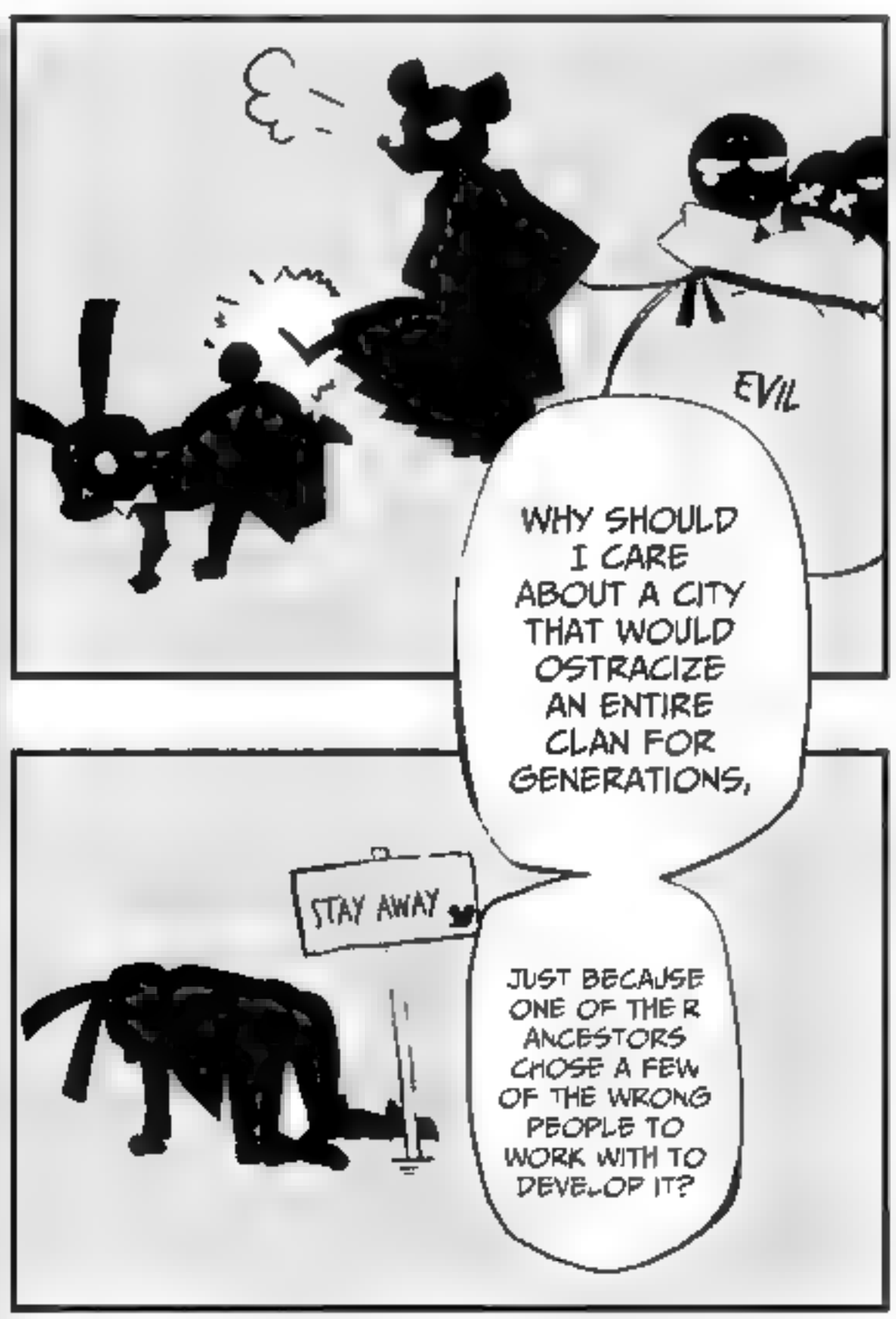
ISN'T THE TWELVE CITY A CITY GOVERNED BY THE TWELVE CLANS?

THE EMPOWERED CLAN FOR THE YEAR IS PREDE-TERMINED, SO WHAT MAKES *YOUR* CLAN SO IMPORTANT?


HAH!
THEN WE'LL DISSOLVE THE TONOGAKE CLAN.


I HAVE NO ATTACHMENT TO THIS OLD MOLDY ASSOCIATION OF BUMS.
TWELVE CITY
AHAHAHAH! GO RIGHT AHEAD! EVEN IF WE DON'T END UP FIGHTING, YOU'LL FRAME US ANYWAY.

WHY SHOULD I CARE FOR THIS TINY STENCH OF A CITY...?


EVIL
WHY SHOULD I CARE ABOUT A CITY THAT WOULD OSTRACIZE AN ENTIRE CLAN FOR GENERATIONS,
STAY AWAY
JUST BECAUSE ONE OF THE R ANCESTORS CHOSE A FEW OF THE WRONG PEOPLE TO WORK WITH TO DEVELOP IT?

...FINE, THEN.

YOU LEAVE ME WITH NO CHOICE.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO TELL ME TWICE TO LEAVE!

BUT I'M NOT GOING ANYWHERE UNTIL EVERY SINGLE ONE OF YOU IS DEAD!!

GROVEL AT MY FEET.

UH... UM, GET ON YOUR KNEES...!

THE EXECUTION OF ENFORCEMENT ISN'T WORKING...!?

SEN, I'M COUNTING ON YOU!

SO FAST...

OH?

ヒザ…

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AND HIS YOKAI POWER SEEMS TO CONTROL ROCKS...

SO HARD... HIS BODY IS HARDER THAN STONE.

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ハッ

BUT NOT FAST ENOUGH.

THAT'S WHERE I'LL CUT HIM DOWN...!

HIS BARRIER DOESN'T COVER HIS ENTIRE BODY.

SEN!

TOO BAD.

3
ほ
AHAHAHA! YOU'RE ALL SO PATHETIC!
YOU'RE DUMBER THAN MY BROTHER!
DID YOU FORGET ABOUT ME?

DID YOU REALLY THINK NO ONE WOULD COME UP WITH A WAY TO COUNTER YOUR AGE-OLD STRATEGY?

THE SPOKEN POWER AND THE SWORDMASTER BODY GUARD.

I HAD THESE ENCHANTED EARPLUGS MADE OUTSIDE THE CITY.

YOUR SPOKEN POWER WON'T WORK ON ME.

My guard has a pair too

THERE ARE BETTER WEAPONS THAN ANTIQUE SWORDS TOO, YOU KNOW?

DOES NO ONE HAVE A BRAIN?

EHEHEHEH. I CAN'T BELIEVE ALL THE CLANS JUST OBEYED EVERY WHIM OF YOUR CLAN WHEN YOUR POWER COULD HAVE BEEN SEALED THIS EASILY.

IF YOU MOVE SO MUCH AS A HAIR, I'LL BLOW THAT COOL FACE OF YOURS WIDE OPEN.

DID YOU SAY YOU'RE SORRY? OR DID YOU SAY FORGIVE ME?

I can't hear you

HMMM? DID YOU SAY SOMETH.NG?

SATO, SEN,

ぼそ…

LEAVE IT TO ME.

EVEN IF YOU APOLOGIZE, SHE'S DEAD NO MATTER WHAT.

I TOLD YOU, I'M KILLING EVERY LAST ONE OF YOU.

WELL, HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO NEGOTIATE MY DEMANDS WITH YOU IF I CAN'T HEAR YOU THROUGH THESE EARPLUGS?

DID I EVER SAY THAT I'D SPARE YOU IF YOU GAVE IN TO MY DEMANDS?

HEH? WHAT'S WITH THAT FACE?

YOU NEED TO DO SOMETHING!

COME ON! COME ON!

SORRY, I FORGOT. THERE'S NOTHING YOU *CAN* DO!

AHAHA-HAH!

MY CUTE LITTLE CLAN HEAD.

YOU WANNA KNOW HOW EXCITING THIS IS...?

I'M SPITTING ON THE SCUM DICTATOR CLAN...!

EHEHE- HEHEH! THIS IS SO FUN!

THIS IS EVEN BETTER THAN WHEN MY BROTHER WAS SCAMMED BY A PORN SITE AND GOT SCARED SHITLESS...!!

I CAN'T TAKE IT ANYMORE...!!

SERIOUSLY, SERIOUSLY...

MISS HOUSE SERVANT, THANKS TO YOU, I NOW KNOW THAT MY ANTI-NEKUNI MEASURES WORK...!

AH! AHAHA- HAH!

THANKS SO MUCH!

AND NOW,

I SERIOUSLY WANNA

THANK YA!

DIE!!!!

HU...

ごくん

WHAT THE HELL IS THIS!?

WHAT IS THIS?

WHAT?

HUU-UUU-HH!?

WHA...

WHAT IS THAT...?

RETURN TO ME.

WHAT THE HELL IS THAT...!?

WHAT!?

IS THAT SWORD MOVING...?

WHY...

THIS IS A SPIRIT OBJECT THAT HAS SERVED THE NEKUNI CLAN FOR GENERATIONS.

THAT'S WHY IT CAN BE CONTROLLED BY THE EXECUTION OF ENFORCEMENT.

Oh wait, you can't hear me because of your earplugs anyway

IT HAS ITS OWN CONSCIOUS-NESS AND CAN UNDERSTAND WORDS.

A SOUL CAME TO RESIDE IN AN OBJECT HUNDREDS OF YEARS OLD.

I DON'T CARE IF YOU CAN HEAR ME, I'M GOING TO SAY IT ANYWAY.

YOU DISTURBED THE PEACE OF THE CITY AND PICKED ON SATO AND SEN.

I'M ANGRY NOW.

AND AN ANGRY NEKUNI IS REALLY SCARY.

恨み来、恋、恨み恋。

ウラミコイ　コイ、ウラミコイ

AND HERE YOU WERE, THINKING YOU'D WON WHEN YOU DIDN'T DO YOUR HOMEWORK...

ER, TWO STEPS AHEAD?

IT'S FINE TO BE CONFIDENT IN YOURSELF, BUT YOU NEED TO THINK ONE STEP...

YOU'RE REALLY LAME.

CHAPTER 28: DOGS OF A FEATHER FLOCK TOGETHER

THAT FACE...

I DON'T HAVE TO HEAR YOUR VOICE TO KNOW WHAT YOU'RE SAYING.

FU...

UFUFU-FU...

BUT I'M DIFFERENT...

THOSE SAME EYES THAT LOOKED DOWN ON MY IDIOTIC PARENTS SUCKING UP TO THE NEKUNI...

IS JUST LIKE THAT GEEZER'S.

YOU DAMN

RA-

WHA...

...?

I JUST DIE...

DID...

DID I JUST DIE...?

HE-

HEY...

?...

I WASN'T... ACTUALLY CUT...?

DAMN, DAMN, DAMN!

THEY'RE MONSTERS...

DAMN...

THANKS, SEN.

You're really great with that sword!

ALL SHE DID WAS CUT THE GUN... BUT HER MURDEROUS AURA IS SO STRONG THAT I FELT LIKE I DIED ALREADY...!?

...I SURRENDER.

I'LL TAKE WHATEVER PUNISHMENT YOU GIVE ME. I'LL OBEY YOU FOR ALL ETERNITY.

I'VE GOT NOTHING.

...I GIVE UP.

I RAISE MY WHITE FLAG.

Stick your sent in the ground

THAT WAS A QUICK CHANGE OF HEART...

THEN TELL ME, WHY DID YOU CAUSE THE SLASHING INCIDENTS?

MAYBE I DID IT BECAUSE OF THE BLOOD OF MY OPPRESSED ANCESTORS.

I HONESTLY KNEW IN MY HEART THAT IT WASN'T JUST A PETTY PLOY TO GET BACK AT PEOPLE,

This is sooo fun! Aha-haha!

BUT I COULDN'T STOP MYSELF.

AT FIRST IT WAS TO GET BACK AT THOSE WHO LOOKED DOWN ON THE TONOGAKE CLAN.

BUT BEFORE I KNEW IT, IT GOT OUT OF HAND.

MI-MIYAKO-SAMA! YOU'RE TOO NAIVE!

I SEE. IF THAT'S THE CASE...

I almost died just now!

SO I'M ACTUALLY...

THANKFUL THAT YOU STOPPED ME...

NEKUNI...

BUT AFTER ALL SHE SAID, I DON'T...

OF COURSE I'M LYING. YOU'RE JUST AS DUMB AS MY BROTHER!

THE BLOOD OF MY ANCESTORS? PLEASE! THE REASON I'M PISSED AND CUTTING DOWN ALL THE TRASH TO GET HIGH IS ALL ME!

YOU HAVE THE BRAIN OF A GRADE SCHOOLER!

AS SOON AS I TAKE EVEN ONE STEP OUT OF THIS PLACE, I'M GOING TO GET MY IDIOT BROTHER OUT BEFORE THE NIGHT IS OVER NO MATTER WHAT IT TAKES...!

AND WE'LL HOP OUT OF THIS GOD-FORSAKEN PLACE AND SELL INFORMATION ABOUT THIS LAND TO SOME SHADY PEOPLE...!

THANK YOU...

SHAAA

THE TONOGAKE WON'T LOSE...!

YOU MAY HAVE WON THE BATTLE, BUT I'LL WIN THE WAR...!

ONCE SOME SPIRITUAL ENTHUSIASTS OVERSEAS HEAR ABOUT THIS, THEY'LL FLOCK TO HERE LIKE HYENAS AND TAKE OVER EVERYTHING!

THAT'S WHY THE OGRES KEEP COMING BACK NO MATTER HOW HARD WE TRY TO EXTERMINATE THEM

THE TWELVE CITY HAS GREAT SPIRITUAL ENERGY EVEN COMPARED TO THE REST OF JAPAN.

HUH?

TONOGAKE-SAN.

EHEHEHEH. SERVES YOU RI...

WHY IS SHE SO CLOSE TO ME?

WHAT?

TONO-GAKE...?

FUH...

AHAHA-HAHA.

SUBMIT...?

SUBMIT YOURSELF TO THE NEKUNI CLAN.

OF COURSE!!

IT'LL BE MY PLEASURE, MIYAKO-SAMA!

I'LL OBEY YOU FOR ALL ETERNITY.

IT WAS AWFULLY CONVENIENT THAT SHE SAID IT HERSELF, THOUGH...

THE REQUIREMENT FOR THIS EFFECT IS TO MAKE PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH THE TARGET AND HAVE *THEM* SAY WHAT YOU WANT THEM TO DO.

IT DOESN'T MATTER IF THE TARGET IS LYING, THE WORD POWER WILL TAKE EFFECT REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THEY MEAN IT OR NOT.

THIS IS THE STRONGER VERSION OF THE EXECUTION OF ENFORCE-MENT.

MIYAKO-SAMA, WHAT DID YOU...?

UNLESS I RELEASE THE POWER, SHE'LL NEVER DISOBEY THE NEKUNI EVER AGAIN.

AND WHY WERE THEY ALL AT CROSS-ROADS...?

WHY DID YOU SUDDENLY START CAUSING MORE SLASHING INCIDENTS?

OF COURSE! I'LL ANSWER ANYTHING!

ALRIGHT, I GOT A QUESTION FOR YOU.

HUH? WHAT'S A PORN MAG?

YOU DON'T NEED TO KNOW.

EVEN WHERE I HIDE MY SNACKS. OR WHERE MY BROTHER HIDES HIS PORN MAGS!

OH. I'M SO SORRY! IT SHOULDN'T BE FUN! I NEED TO KNOW MY PLACE. A SCUM RABBIT...!

AND I THOUGHT IT'D BE FUN. AND PERFECT FOR LETTING OUT MY FRUS-TRATION...

HORNS...?

BECAUSE IT TOLD ME TO.

THAT THING WITH THE HORNS.

IT WAS LIKE SOMETHING OUT OF A PICASSO... LIKE A PUZZLE...? NO....

WAIT...

UM...

MY MEMORY'S A BIT HAZY... I THINK... IT WAS WHITE?

WHA... NO, THAT'S OKAY...

I WILL GLADLY REFLECT ON MY WRONG-DOINGS AND LICK YOUR SHOES

どっか行き

ここから

AND WHAT IS THIS "THING WITH THE HORNS?"

SHE'S BEEN BEWITCHED!

SHE'S...

WHAT WAS I TALKING ABOUT...?

THERE'S SOMEONE PULLING THE STRINGS BEHIND TONOGAKE-SAN...

NOW,

AND THERE IS NO LONGER ANY NEED TO KEEP UP THIS FARCE OF DRESSING IN THE SAME MANNER.

BUT THEY ACHIEVED THEIR GOAL.

THE RABBITS WERE CAUGHT FASTER THAN ANTICIPATED.

I BELIEVE IT IS YOUR TURN,

TORAKO?

WILL WHAT I DO REALLY...

DO I REALLY HAVE TO DO THIS?

YOU HAVE ALREADY CUT DOWN MANY.

TORAKO.

YOU ARE IN NO POSITION TO STOP NOW.

MIYAKO-SAMA?

LET'S TALK.

SEN.

I COULDN'T FALL ASLEEP.

What's this chill?

SHIVER

NO...

IMMEDIATE ANSWER

HEY, DO YOU HAVE ANYONE YOU LIKE?

↑ INOYAMA

AND SOMETIMES, BROTHER WOULD SIT BY HIS SIDE...

GRAND-FATHER USED TO DRINK HERE A LOT, A LONG TIME AGO.

I GUESS IF I WERE AN ADULT, I'D DRINK AT A TIME LIKE THIS.

I GUESS EVEN GRANDFATHER HAD NIGHTS LIKE THIS WHEN HE COULDN'T SLEEP.

THAT'S RARE, FOR YOU TO ASK A QUESTION...

MIYAKO-SAMA...

WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO BECOME THE HEAD OF THE NEKUNI?

...YOU SEE,

BECAUSE THIS ABILITY FORCES SOMEONE TO OBEY YOU AND EXECUTE YOUR COMMAND AGAINST THEIR WILL.

AN ABILITY THAT TRAMPLES AND TWISTS WHAT IS DEAR TO THE TARGET.

YOU CAN'T SHOW ANY EMPATHY TOWARD YOUR TARGET.

IN OTHER WORDS, YOU CAN'T LOOK AT THINGS FROM THEIR POINT OF VIEW.

YOU CAN'T BE SYMPA-THETIC.

DO YOU KNOW WHAT THE REQUIREMENT TO USE THE EXECUTION OF ENFORCEMENT IS?

NO...

FATHER, MOTHER, BROTHER, AND I WERE OUT TOGETHER, AND SOMEONE ATTACKED US.

YOU KNOW ABOUT THE INCIDENT WHEN MY MOTHER AND FATHER WERE KILLED, RIGHT?

THE ASSAILANT MUST HAVE SHOWN HIMSELF TO MY BROTHER AS HE WAS ATTACKING,

AND HE WAS SOMEONE MY BROTHER KNEW.

BUT MY BROTHER COULDN'T USE THE EXECUTION OF ENFORCEMENT, AND MY PARENTS WERE KILLED.

MY FATHER'S THROAT WAS SLICED, BUT JUST BEFORE HE DIED, HE PASSED HIS ABILITY TO MY BROTHER TO PROTECT MOTHER AND ME.

AND HE BECAME A FAILURE AS THE HEAD.

MY KIND BROTHER FELT SYMPATHY.

HE MUST HAVE HEARD HIS LIFE STORY, OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT.

I COULD HAVE DONE IT...

AS I LOOKED AT MY LIFELESS PARENTS...

AND AT THAT POINT, I THOUGHT TO MYSELF...

MY LIFE WAS SAVED THANKS TO THE GUARD AT THE TIME.

I'D BE ABLE TO KILL MY EMPATHY FOR ANYONE.

IF I WERE GOING TO LOSE MY MOTHER AND FATHER...

I WOULD HAVE BEEN ABLE TO KILL HIM.

THAT'S WHY I HAVE TO BE THE HEAD OF THE NEKUNI.

SO I CAN DO WHAT MY BROTHER CAN'T.

SEN, YOU'RE JUST LIKE ME, RIGHT?

REMEMBER WHEN YOU ASKED ME TO LET YOU BE THE NEKJNI BODYGUARD RIGHT BEFORE MISTER WEASEL SHOWED UP?

BUT I STILL CAN'T BE SO IMPARTIAL TO THE POINT THAT I CAN USE IT ON PEOPLE I'M CLOSE TO.

YES. IT SEEMS EVERYONE THOUGHT MY BROTHER WOULD BECOME THE NEXT HEAD, BUT I'M THE SUCCESSOR.

...YOU'RE THE HEAD, MIYAKO-SAMA...?

MIYAKO-SAMA... I HAVE A REQUEST...

BUT YOU'RE NOT THE HEAD ANYMORE, HUH? THEN NEXT TIME I SEE SANA-CHAN, I'LL ASK...

SINCE THE BODYGUARD OF THE NEKUNI CLAN IS SUPPOSED TO BE THE HEAD OF THE INJHARA CLAN, I WAS GOING TO ASK YOU, SEN-SAN, BUT...

YOU ASSUMED MY BROTHER WOULD BECOME THE NEXT HEAD, SO YOU ENTRUSTED THE HEADSHIP TO SANA-CHAN,

BUT YOU KNEW THAT I WOULD BE JUST LIKE MY GRANDFATHER.

THAT'S WHY YOU ASKED TO BE THE BODYGUARD, RIGHT?

...YES, THOUGH MY FATHER WASN'T PLEASED...

THAT'S WHY...

WE LET OURSELVES BE BURNED IN ORDER TO PROTECT WHAT'S DEAR TO US.

BECAUSE WE'RE SO ALIKE.

DON'T WORRY. I'M HAPPY THAT YOU'RE MY BODYGUARD, SEN.

IT MAKES ME FEEL BETTER TO HAVE YOU BY MY SIDE.

THANKS.

...NO, I SHOULD BE THANKING YOU.

BUT IF THAT'S THE CASE,

I'LL BE RIGHT BESIDE YOU, WATCHING YOU.

I WON'T TURN MY EYES AWAY FROM THE CLAN ANYMORE

THE TWO OF THEM MIGHT CLASH VIOLENTLY ONE DAY.

IT WAS ESPECIALLY EVIDENT IN TODAY'S BATTLE

SHE'S BECOMING MORE AND MORE LIKE GOICHI-SAMA.

FOR KYOICHI-SAMA'S SAKE.

MIYAKO-SAMA BECAME THE HEAD

I HOPE THAT DAY... NEVER COMES.

恨み来、恋、恨み恋。

ウラミコイ　コイ　ウラミコイ

CRAP, DON'T TELL ME I DIED AGA—

NOPE.

I FEEL LIKE I'VE BEEN HERE BEFORE...

WHERE AM I?

WHAT TOOK YOU SO LONG? I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU ALL THIS TIME.

GRAMPS ALREADY DIED THOUGH.

THIS IS THE REALM OF YOUR CONSCIOUSNESS.

YOU'RE...

I'M GONNA TEACH YOU EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT HOW TO USE THIS BODY,

SO DON'T YOU DARE BE A FAILURE ANYMORE.

CHAPTER 29: HE WHO DOES NOT DARE ENTER A RAT'S HOLE WILL NOT CATCH THE YOUNG

USE THIS...!?

KYOICHI, ARE YOU REALLY GOING TO...

HAH! I'LL NEVER LOSE TO YOU, KEI.

GAAAAAH!! YOU DIRTY BASTARD! DAMN IT!!

I ONLY MAKE THAT FACE WHEN I'M PLAYING GAMES WITH YOU.

IS THAT THE FACE YOU MADE WHEN PEOPLE VISITED YOU WHEN YOU WERE SICK!?

SMUG FACE

UGH... YOUR DAMN SMUG FACE PISSES ME OFF.

...HM?

SHUT UP! PAY FOR YOUR SINS IN HELL!

OW OW OW OW! I JUST GOT BETTER FROM BEING SICK!

SO YOU ADMIT IT!

GAH!

Y... YOU THINK SO? I THINK IT'S JUST YOUR IMAGI-

GAA-AAA-AH!!

HEY,

DID YOU GET STRONGER?

THAT'S NOT JUST FROM WORKING OUT.

I'M THE ONE ALWAYS PICKING FIGHTS WITH YOU, SO I KNOW.

I CAME TO SEE IF YOU GOT BETTER TODAY.

OH WELL, IT DOESN'T MATTER.

SOME-THING ELSE MUST HAVE...

BUT DIDN'T YOU COME TO SEE IF I'M BETTER!!?

Kill me!?

WE'RE GONNA PLAY 'TIL I WIN! I'M GONNA KILL YOU!

NOW IT'S TIME FOR ANOTHER ROUND! IT'S PAYBACK TIME!!

IT'S FINE. THOSE TWO'VE BEEN ALWAYS THAT WAY.

Ever since Kyoichi was in middle school

KYOICHI'S GETTING BEAT UP.

HEY AYAKA, YOU'RE NOT GONNA DO ANYTHING ABOUT THAT?

I'M THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN DO STUFF LIKE CRUSHING HUGE BOULDERS AND CARRYING THEM...

Uh, don't ask

But where did those huge boulders come from.?

OH, PLEASE. I DON'T MIND IT.

SORRY FOR MAKING YOU WORK, AYAKA-CHAN.

AND ROE MAYO! AND BUTTER!

WE HAVE POTATOES, TOO!

ROE MAYO

AH!

NO!

HUH?

WE'LL GIVE YOU UNLIMITED FRESH BAKED SWEET POTATOES AS THANKS!!

HUH? NO, I CAN'T, I'LL GAIN WEIGHT... I...

OH HEY, KYOICHI. WHERE'S KEI?

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

YOU REALLY HAVE NO MERCY WHEN IT COMES TO GAMES.

OH, I DESTROYED HIM SO BADLY THAT HE TURNED INTO ASHES.

ゴゴゴ…

WHAT? NO WAY!

AND SO FAR, THE AWESOME CAT GIRL'S DEFINITELY GOT US BEAT.

WE'RE SEEING WHO CAN DRAW THE BEST!

WHOA!

L-LOOK HERE!

OH? LEMME SEE...

HUMPH... HOW RUDE.

↑ RUDE

IT'S A LION!

YOU, BUT YOU JUST GOT SPLASHED IN THE FACE WITH MILK...

Y...

Y... YEAH?

WHAT IS THIS WHAT IS THIS WHAT IS THIS WHA IS TH WHAT I THIS WH IS THI

Y-Y-

OH CRAP, THIS ONE ACTUALLY LOOKS PRETTY GOOD ONLY BECAUSE IT'S NOT AS TERRIBLE AS THE OTHER ONES...

Just look at that six-pack

B-BUT SEE! THIS OGRE DRAWING TURNED OUT WELL!

OH? WHAT ARE YOU DRAWING ON THIS ONE?

NOPE. NOWADAYS YOU CALL ALL MAN-EATING YOKAI OGRES, BUT WHAT SHE DREW IS WHAT AN ACTUAL OGRE IS LIKE.

HOLD ON. DO OGRES REALLY WEAR STUPID SHORTS LIKE THIS?

Tiger shorts?

OH, REALLY?

You sure know a lot

HEY NATSU...

...HM?

OW!

HEY...

HO?

NATSJ...

What was that all about?

A-ARE YOU ALRIGHT!?

LEMME SEE.

H-HEY! NATSUHO?

B-BATH-ROOM!

OH MAN, YOU'RE SO RED...

?

I FEEL LIKE... SHE DOESN'T TALK TO ME FACE TO FACE ANYMORE...

YES.

DID I DO SOME-THING...?

TORA-KO...

OH? ARE YOU GONNA TRY TO DO SOME-THING?

STOP! YOU'LL BRING THE ENTIRE HOUSE DOWN!

I'M GONNA GO BANG MY HEAD AGAINST A WALL TOO...

HMM...

I FEEL LIKE NOTHIN'S GETTING THROUGH...

Again...

I'M TRYIN' TO BE MORE AGGRESSIVE, BUT...

.....

SO? D.D YOU MAKE ANY PROGRESS?

WHAT THE HECK IS THAT POSE?

THEN WHY DON'CHA INVITE HIM TO SOMETHING YA CAN'T BACK OUT OF?

WELL, IF YOU GOT MOTIVATION...

B... BUT IT MAKES SENSE.

SO WHERE ARE WE GOING...?

I CALL IT...

THE IF YOU MAKE A MOVE IN A PLACE ONLY COUPLES GO, THEN EVEN THE DENSEST KIND OF IDIOT LIKE HIM WILL HAVE TO NOTICE PLAN!

SO LONG!!

AHA-HA-HAH!

WHAT DO YA THINK YER SAYIN', IN BROAD DAYLIGHT!?

ARE YOU STUPID!!?

A LOVE HOTEL.

WHAT DO YOU THINK MY POINT IS!?

IF I CALL IT A DATE, THEN IT'S NOT FRIENDS HANGING OUT ANYMORE!

WHAT!? TORA-KO...

THEN A DATE! GO ASK HIM OUT ON A DATE!

AND WOULDN'T IT BE A BOTHER TO HIM...?

B... BUT...

I'M TOO AFRAID TO BRING IT UP ALL OF A SUDDEN...

OF COURSE NOT.

...YOU'RE MAKIN' FUN OF ME, AREN'T YA.

There there.

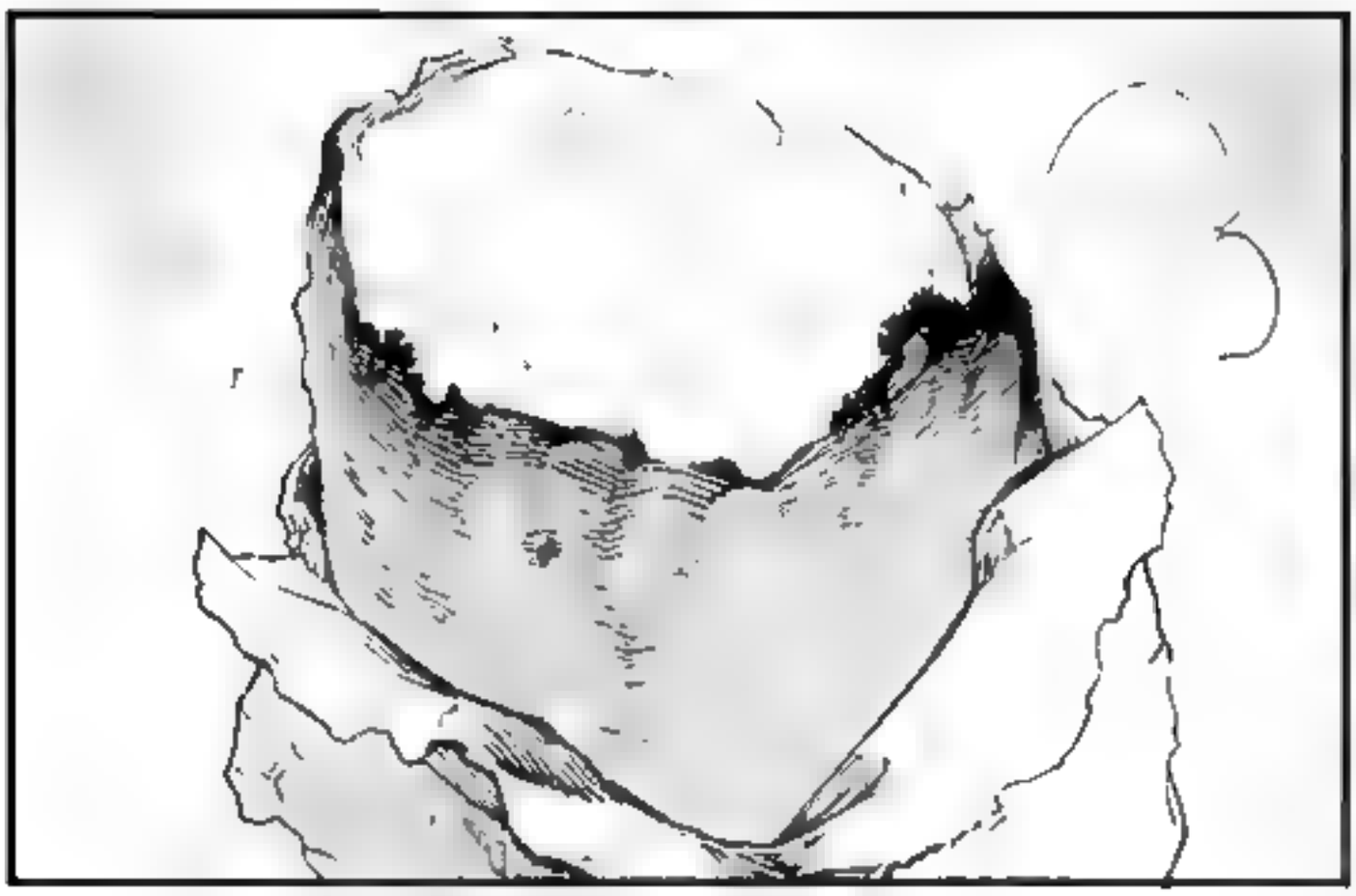
WELL, IF YOU'RE SCARED, THEN I GUESS THERE'S NOTHING WE CAN DO. HERE, I'LL MAKE YOU FEEL BETTER.

THAT'S WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT! BRING IT ON!!

Toss

BAKED SWEET POTATOES! AND REGULAR POTATOES TOO!

HEY EVERYONE! THEY'RE DONE!



Potatoes!

YES. CAN I HELP YOU?
...YOU'RE... SATO-SAN, RIGHT?
THAT CAT GIRL OVER THERE'S A YOKAI, RIGHT?

HMM... NOT REALLY!

WHEN YOU'RE AROUND HER, DO YOU EVER FEEL LIKE SHE'S NOT A NORMAL PERSON?

AND I WASN'T SURE WHETHER TO GET HER REGULAR FOOD OR CAT FOOD. THAT'S ABOUT IT.
SOMETIMES SHE'D TRY TO GET IN THE BATH AS A CAT AND MAKE A COMMOTION,

SATO-SAN!

I SEE... THANKS.

OH... I GUESS I MADE TOO MUCH...

I gave so many away for other people to take home, but there's still so much!

YOU SAID TO EAT AS MUCH AS I WANT, BUT THIS IS TOO MUCH!

TORAKO'S MOM IS MY MOM'S OLDER SISTER.

HUH? AUNTIE...?

OH. THAT ACTUALLY EXPLAINS A LOT.

About the way those two talk

TORAKO! TAKE SOME HOME FOR AUNTIE!

I WAS JUST WONDERING IF THIS WAS ENOUGH SINCE MAMA'S A BIG EATER.

THANKS.

OH, YEAH, I'LL TAKE SOME HOME. GIMME A LOT!

DON'T TELL ME! IS AUNTIE'S WOUND STILL NOT HEALED...?

HM? WHAT'S WRONG, TORAKO?

OH, REALLY? I KNEW YOU HAD GOOD INSTINCTS, BUT THAT'S STILL AMAZING...

IT WAS BECAUSE NATSUHO-CHAN FOUND HIM AND WE WERE ABLE TO CORNER HIM!

YOU KNOW, WHEN WE CAUGHT THE SLASHER,

CHIE-CHAN...!

H-HEY!!

WELL, SHE WAS JUST TAKING A NAP ON THE SIDE WHEN I GOT THERE, THOUGH.

REALLY? THAT'S NOT GOOD...

2:22

BUT AN OGRE POPPED UP ON THE EDGE OF THE CITY...

WELL... WE ALREADY EXTERMINATED ALL THE OGRES ASIDE FROM THE SINISTER AREA THAT PEOPLE DON'T GO NEAR, RIGHT?

WHAT'S WRONG, MIYAKO?

WHEREVER? BUT WOULDN'T THAT BE TOUGH FOR YOU?

SHE'S SO EAGER. IS IT HER HUNTING INSTINCTS?

OH...

I'M READY! WHENEVER, WHEREVER!

???

UM, WELL...

I DON'T MIND GOING...

I... I ASSUMED YOU'D COME WITH ME...

SORRY... I DIDN'T MEAN TO...

I— I'LL GO TOO...

IT'S PROBABLY JUST A WEAK OGRE, BUT JUST THE TWO OF YOU IS...

OH, BUT YOU WERE SO SICK JUST A LITTLE WHILE AGO.

UM,

SO,

UM...

WELL...

WHAT JUST HAPPENED...?

WE WERE JUST GLANCING AROUND, CONFUSED, AND THEN NATSUHO...

!?

FIRST WE CAME INTO THIS BUILDING WHERE THE OGRE WAS

AND WE FELT SOMETHING MOVE AROUND BUT WE COULDN'T SEE IT.

JUMPED OUT OF THE WINDOW.

SUDDENLY SAID "LEAVE IT TO ME!" AND...

I can see it!!

I'LL HUNT IT DOWN... IT WON'T TAKE LONG, SO WAIT FOR ME THERE...!

AND SHE COULD FINALLY GET AROUND ALMOST NORMALLY AROUND THE TIME SHE MET YOU.

WHAT? REALLY?

SHE'S AMAZING.

WHEN I JUST MET HER, SHE WAS SO SHY AND GLUED TO HER CARDBOARD BOXES,

SO SOMETIMES I FEEL KINDA SAD...

AND WONDER IF SHE DOESN'T NEED ME TO LOOK OUT FOR HER ANYMORE.

S-SO...

YOU THINK SO...?

I-IT'S FINE! SHE'S STILL COUNTING ON YOU, EVEN JUST NOW!

I WANT YA TO LOOK OUT FOR SOMEONE ELSE...

Again...

OH YEAH, I NEED TO LOOK OUT FOR OGRES.

JO...

AND I EVEN ADDED A "JUST KIDDIN'" TOO...

JUST KIDDIN'...

KYOICHI-SAN!!

I CAN'T SEE IT BECAUSE IT'S FAST AND THERE'S NO LIGHT HERE.

SOMETHIN'S THERE...! DID THE OGRE NATSUHO-CHAN WENT AFTER COME BACK...?

WHA...

WHAT WAS THAT!?

CATS CAN SEE WELL IN THE DARK, SO THAT'S WHY NATSUHO-CHAN COULD REACT TO IT...

OR WERE THERE TWO TO BEGIN WITH...?

THIS OGRE IS A HANDFUL... IF I HAVE TO PROTECT KYOICHI-SAN AT THE SAME TIME, I CAN'T...

SHE WANTS TO DO THIS ON HER OWN!?

AYAKA!

WAH!

SORRY, KYOICHI-SAN!

THAT HURT!

BUT NOW... I...

AYAKA FIGHTING ON HER OWN BECAUSE I'M WEAK.

THIS IS ALL TOO FAMILIAR.

IF ONLY IT WERE A HUGE MONSTER LIKE THE ONES I FACE IN THE MOUNTAINS, BUT I'VE BEEN FIGHTING NOTHIN' BUT FAST ENEMIES LATELY.

JUST MY LUCK...

IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE...

MY WHEELS JUST KEEP SPINNIN' IN THE SAME PLACE.

I WAS RIGHT TO NOT BRING MY HUGE AXE.

IT'S ATTACKS AREN'T STRONG, BUT THIS IS THE WORST MATCHUP!

BUT THOSE TWO...

I'M AN IDIOT!

OF ALL THE TIMES, GETTIN' CAUGHT UP NOW...!

PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER!!

WALLOWIN' IN SELF-PITY DOESN'T CHANGE A THING. ONLY THING TO DO IS...

TO GIVE IT EVERYTHIN' I GOT...!!

GNAW THROUGH.

GIH!?

WHAT? I CAN SEE THE OGRE?

BUT WHY?

!!?

??

NO, I CAN ASK QUESTIONS LATER! I NEED TO...!

PULVERIZE IT!!

KYOICHI-SAN?

KYOICHI-SA...

KYOICHI-SAN! IT'S OVER!

Y... YES...!

BE A LITTLE MORE GENTLE NEXT TIME, WILL YOU?

YOU DID IT?

WHO'S MORE IMPRES-SIVE...?

OH, THERE WAS ANOTHER ONE? YOU'RE IMPRESSIVE, AYAKA-CHAN!

TATTERED...

UNHARMED

Look! Look!

KYOICHI! AYAKA-CHAN! I GOT IT!

A cat showing off its prey

NATSUHO-CHAN?

?? KYOICHI?

DID YOU HIT SOMETHING?

...!

WH-WHAT ARE YOU DOING? JUST EARLIER TODAY YOU WOULDN'T EVEN LOOK AT ME, WHY ARE YOU-

TH-THAT DOESN'T MATTER...

I WAS FAR AWAY FROM THOSE TWO.

I'VE ALWAYS FELT LIKE...

LIKE I'M THE ODD ONE OUT,

AS IF I WEREN'T EVEN THERE.

I NEED TO BE MORE DIRECT...

I CAN'T STAY LIKE THIS.

I WANT TO ALWAYS BE WITH YOU.

NOT FAIR...

KYOICHI-SAN...

MORE...!!

HUH?

P...
PLEASE GO OUT ON A DATE WITH ME...

HUH?

恨み来、恋、恨み恋。

ウラミコイ　コイ　ウラミコイ

OH NO!

I HAVE A COW-LICK...

WHOA, LOOK AT HER, SHE'S SO CUTE! LET'S TALK TO HER!

DO YOU REALLY THINK SHE'S SINGLE? COME ON.

...YOU HAVE NO DREAMS...

CHAPTER 30: OGRE

ALRIGHT...!

OH? DID YOU CHANGE UP YOUR HAIR?

M- M-M- MORNIN'!

WANYAH!

YO! YOU'RE EARLY, AYAKA.

I-IT LOOKS GOOD, YOU SHOULD DO IT MORE OFTEN.

O- OKAY.

UM,

IT'S A D-DATE, AFTER ALL...

SO YEAH...

I curled it a little...

PLEASE GO OUT ON A DATE WITH ME...

UH—

N—NATSUHO-CHAN, I—I MEAN...

HUH?

AND I'M PRETTY MUCH DECLARIN' WAR ON NATSUHO-CHAN!!

WHAT DID I JUST... I DIDN'T MEAN TO ACTUALLY SAY!...

HUH?

DO... DO YOUR BEST...!

TRYING TO BE A SUPPORTIVE FRIEND →

NATSUHO-CHAN... WHY DID SHE...

KYOICHI-SAN DID LOOK CONFUSED...!

OH NO, DO THEY THINK THIS IS SOME FUNNY JOKE!? NO...

?
WHERE ARE WE?

OH, THERE IT IS.

I'M DONE, IT'S GAME OVER!!!

AAAAH, THERE GOES MY CONFIDENCE.

WHAT? FOR ME?

YEP.

EVERYTHING WAS PACKED! THEME PARKS, MOVIE THEATERS, EVERYTHING

YA I KNOW

SO I LOOKED UP SOME PLACES THAT YOU MIGHT LIKE.

YOU TOLD ME YOU HADN'T DECIDED ON WHAT YOU WANTED TO DO, RIGHT?

BUT THERE'S NO BACKING OUT NOW...! IT'S DO OR DIE!

BRING IT ON...!!

WAIT, KYOICHI-SAN ALWAYS TAKES ME TO CRAZY WEIRD PLACES...

TH-THANK YOU...!

THAT MAKES ME HAPPY...

I KNOW, RIGHT? THIS CAT CAFÉ JUST OPENED RECENTLY.

WHAT IS THIS?

AM I IN HEAVEN?

THIS IS HEAVEN!

AND WE'RE IN A COUPLE SEAT...!

L-LOOK! KYOICHI-SAN!

THIS LITTLE KITTY'S... RUBBING AGAINST ME!

ON THE JOB

WHAT...!?

SULKING

SHE STARTS SULKING WHEN YOU TREAT HER LIKE A CAT TOO MUCH...! BUT HERE, YOU CAN PET THEM TO YOUR HEART'S CONTENT...!

FWAHA-HAH... THAT'S WHY I TOOK YOU HERE.

B-BUT I FEEL LIKE WE'RE CHEATING ON NACCHAN SOMEHOW...

ALRIGHT, I'M NOT HOLDIN' BACK!

OF COURSE, WHAT DID I JUST SAY?

CAN I REALLY? KYOICHI-SAN? CAN I REALLY PET THEM ALL I WANT!?

Touch me already

I DID IT, TORAKO...!

THAT WAS HEAVEN... AND IT PLAYED RIGHT INTO MY STRATEGY...!!

That was expen-sive

That was amazin'

DON'T PICK UP ANYTHING HEAVY. DON'T TRY TO BE RELIABLE. BUT INSTEAD...

SO WE HAVE TO SEAL YOUR POWER AT ALL COSTS.

INSTEAD...?

LISTEN, AYAKA. EVEN I HAVE TO ADMIT THAT KITTY ABSOLUTELY HAS THE UPPER HAND WHEN IT COMES TO THE "I WANT TO PROTECT HER SMILE" FACTOR.

GIRL POWER

I FEEL LIKE I CAN DO ANYTHIN'...!

I CAN DO IT... I THINK I CAN DO IT!

EVEN THOUGH I DIDN'T PLAN FOR IT TO HAPPEN, I ENDED UP PLAYIN' WITH A BUNCH OF CUTE LITTLE ANIMALS AND SHOWED HIM THAT I'M VULNERABLE, TOO!

JUST BEING HERSELF

AT FIRST I WASN'T SURE HOW I WAS GONNA DO IT, BUT I THINK I'M OFF TO A GOOD START.

YEAH!

ALRIGHT, KYOICHI-SAN! LET'S GET MOVIN'!!

5X SPEED

YEAH!

OH MAN, THAT WAS A BLAST!
LET'S GO HOME!

ANNIHILATE KYOICH-SAN AFTER HE CHALLENGES ME FOR A REMATCH ON AIR HOCKEY.

SHOW MY MASTERY OF A CRANE GAME WITH AN EVIL FACE.

NEXT THING I KNOW WE'RE SINGING ANIME SONGS TOGETHER AT THE TOP OF OUR LUNGS.

GET A PERFECT SCORE BOWLING WHILE USING PRO CURVE BALLS.

I WAS TRYIN' TO ATTACK HIM WITH GIRL POWER, BUT THAT WAS JUST NORMAL POWER!!

GIRL

POWER

↑ALL THAT'S LEFT

Yeeeeah

NOOOO-OOOOO-OOOO!!!

WHYYY-YYYY!!?

AYAKA? ARE YOU OKAY?

THIS ISN'T A DATE AT ALL... WHAT WAS I EVEN DOIN'...?

WHA-
NOO-
OOO-
OO...
L-LET'S GO INSIDE SOMEWHERE, IT'S GETTING WINDY...
WAH!

JUST WHEN I THOUGHT IT COULDN'T GET ANY WORSE... I DON'T WANNA LIVE ANYMORE...
OH MAN, YOU CAN'T JUST JUMP TO GET THAT.
I... I'LL LOOK FOR SOMETHING LONG TO KNOCK IT DOWN...

AYAKA!

ALRIGHT...
LET'S TRY IT OUT.

HERE, BE CAREFUL NEXT TIME.

UH... I JUST WENT UP AND GOT IT.

? WHAT? BUT HOW?

WAIT, BUT HOW DID HE GET UP AND DOWN THAT HIGH SO FAST...?

WELL, BUT...

WHAT? ALL THE WAY UP THERE? YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO, YOU COULD'VE GOTTEN HURT...

IT LOOKED CUTE ON YOU, SO IT WOULD'VE BEEN A SHAME IF WE LOST IT.

ふぅ…

HE COMPLI-MENTED ME...!

TH— THANK YA...

ひゃい

KYOICHI-SAN!?

!?

O—OKAY, WHERE ARE WE GO—

KYOICHI-SAN!?

ﾊｯ

...

THE WAY I USED IT LAST NIGHT WAS FINE, BUT THIS... REALLY TAKES A LOT...

CRAP...! I GOT TOO COCKY.

ﾌﾗｯ

...

...MOM,

I'M GONNA GET GOIN' NOW.

HUH...?

ARE YA AWAKE?

IT'S FINE!

NO! THIS IS EMBARRASSING! I CAN WALK!

NO, I'M GETTING OFF!

IT'S FINE!

NO!

FROM BEING SICK...

I WAS THE ONE WHO ASKED YOU OUT WHEN YOU JUST GOT BETTER...

DON'T WORRY, JUST LET ME CARRY YOU.

SORRY. I'M GETTING OFF.

IF YA DON'T SETTLE DOWN, I'M HURLIN' YA STRAIGHT INTO THE RIVER...

THIS IS MAKING ME NOSTALGIC.

Especially with that exchange just now

AND YOU'D LECTURE ME WHILE CARRYING ME ON YOUR BACK.

YOU WOULD HELP ME ALL THE TIME SINCE I GOT PICKED ON FOR BEING A FAILURE.

I THOUGHT NOW I COULD BE MORE SELF-RELIANT, BUT I GUESS THINGS HAVEN'T REALLY CHANGED AFTER ALL...

THAT AYAKA LOGIC WAS SOMETHING...

AHAHAH...

YA WIMP, ALL YA HAD TO DO WAS PUNCH 'IM AND HE WOULD'VE RAN HOME CRYIN' TO HIS MAMA.

THAT'S NOT TRUE.

I CAN SEE THAT YER TRYIN' HARDER THAN BEFORE, AND...

AND NOW I'M GIVING YOU TROUBLE... I'M SO LAME...

WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO YOU? FLATTERING ME WON'T GET YOU ANYTHING.

I...

I DON'T THINK YER...

I'M NOT JUST TRYIN' TA FLATTER YA...

I GOTTA GO FOR IT...!

LAME...

I REALLY THINK—

AYAKA?

—THIS-ISN'T GOOD.

OH NO...!

HE'S GONNA FIGURE OUT THAT I LIKE 'IM.

HE CAN HEAR MY HEART RACIN'.

I'M SURE OF IT.

I'VE COME ALL THIS WAY... WHAT AM I AFRAID OF...!?

IF I CAN'T SAY IT, WHY CAN'T I JUST SHOW IT INSTEAD...?

BUT SO WHAT...?

TODAY WAS REALLY FUN, WASN'T IT?

WHY...?

THIS YEAR WAS KINDA CHAOTIC AND WE DIDN'T REALLY DO MUCH EXCEPT MAYBE FOR THAT ONE TIME WE HUNG OUT AT THE MALL,

BUT, HOW DO I PUT IT...

YES...

IT'S ALWAYS A BLAST HANGING OUT WITH YOU.

I...

HAD A BLAST TOO...!

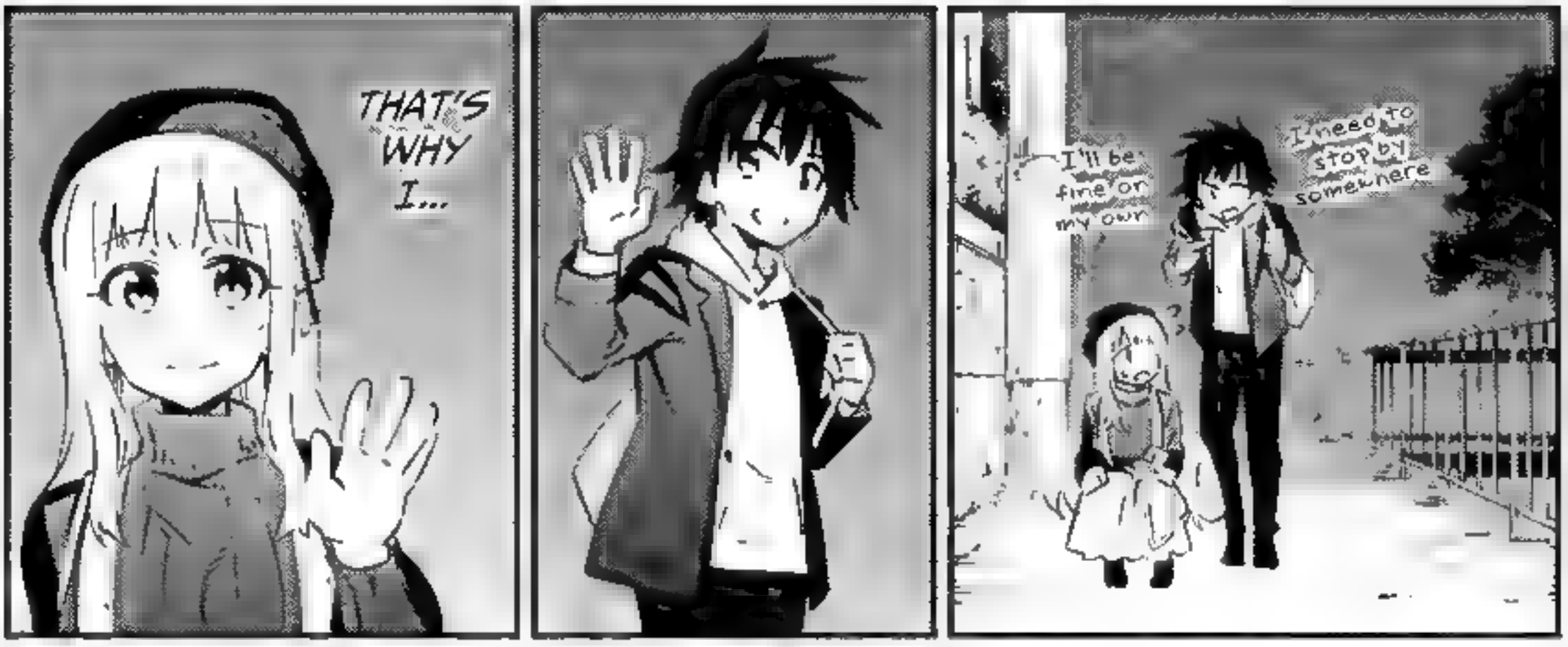
I SEE...

THAT SOUNDS GREAT!

AND WE CAN EVEN GO SOMEWHERE OUTSIDE THE CITY!

YES!

NEXT T.ME, WE CAN BR.NG NATSUHO AND SANA.


THAT'S WHY I...
I'll be fine on my own
I need to stop by somewhere

YO.
HUH? TORAKO!?
WHY ARE YOU DRESSED LIKE THAT?

NOTHIN' HAPPENED.

JUST LIKE ALWAYS,

WHAT ABOUT YOU? WEREN'T YOU SUPPOSED TO SPEND THE NIGHT WITH KYOICHI?

KYOICHI-SAN SAID HE HAD TO STOP BY SOMEWHERE...

Ya keep tryin' to recycle that joke

I'M PATROLLING YA KNOW HOW DANGEROUS IT'S BEEN RECENTLY.

BUT...

...I REALIZED A LOT OF THINGS.

WHY I KEPT GOING ABOUT IN A ROUNDABOUT WAY,

AND WHY I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING BEFORE NATSUHO-CHAN CAME...

...IF YA NEED TO TALK, I'M LISTENING.

WE SHARE THE SAME INTERESTS,

AND IT MAKES ME WANNA ALWAYS BE WITH HIM.

IT'S ALWAYS A BLAST HANGING OUT WITH YOU.

I HAVE A LOT OF FUN BEING WITH KYOICHI-SAN.

WAS SOMETHIN' I WAS REALLY AFRAID OF.

LETTING OUT A SECRET I'VE BEEN KEEPIN' AFTER ALL THIS TIME... AND LOSIN' THE RELATIONSHIP I HAD WITH HIM FOR AS LONG AS I REMEMBER...

THAT'S WHY... I WAS AFRAID.

IF I CONFESSED... AND IF KYOICHI-SAN DIDN'T LIKE THAT...

OUR RELATIONSHIP WOULDN'T BE THE SAME...

IF I WERE IN YOUR SHOES...

...I'D PROBABLY FEEL THE SAME WAY.

IT'S NOT JUST YOU.

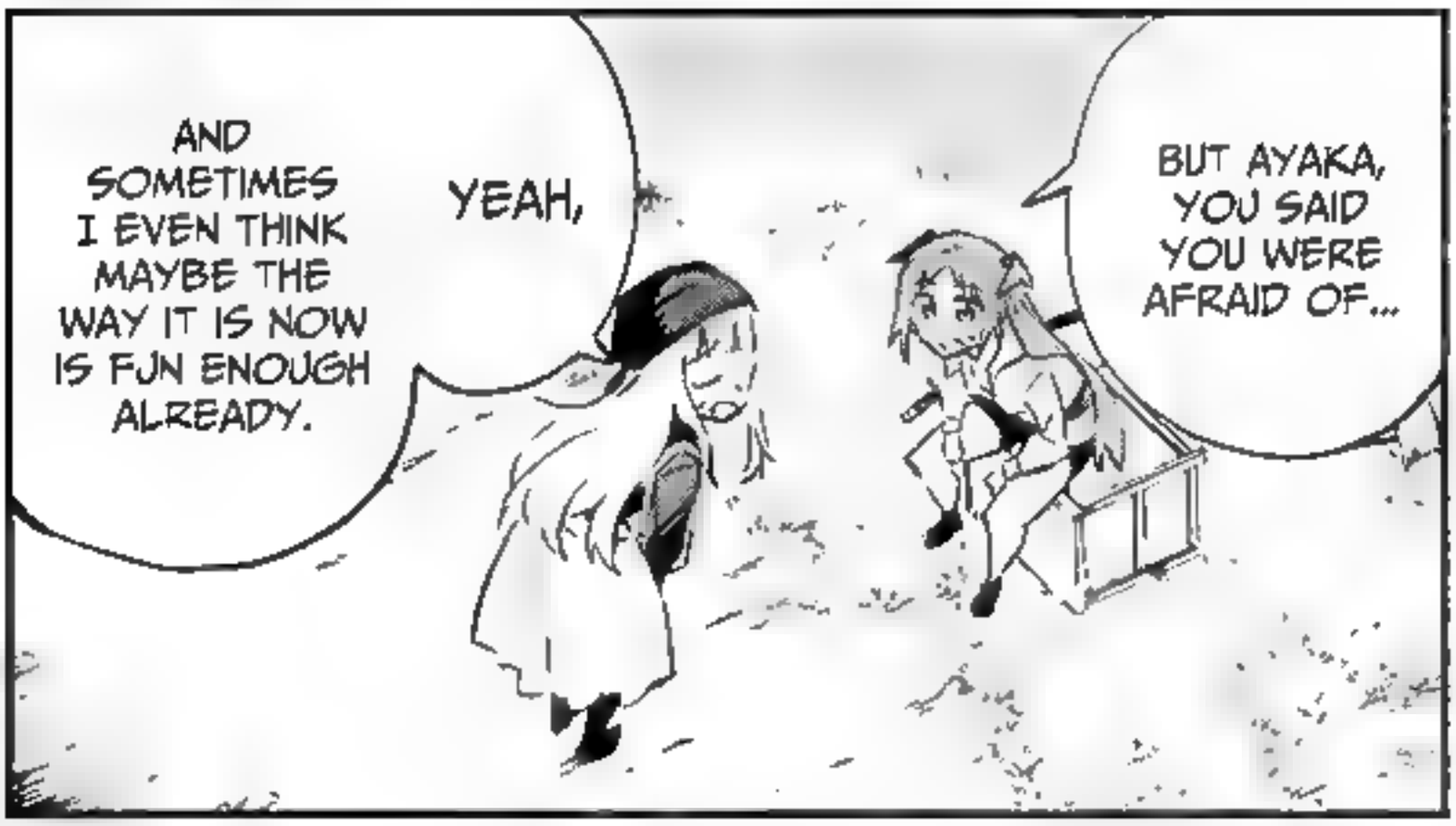
...OF COURSE, I GET IT.

I GET IT NOW... I'VE BEEN TRYIN' TA GET YA TO DO SOMETHING I CAN'T EVEN DO...

I PUSHED YA TO DO SOMETHING UNCOMFORTABLE AND MADE YA DO SOMETHING YA MIGHT REGRET...

I'M SORRY...

WHAT ARE YA TALKIN' ABOUT? I *NEED* YA TO PUSH ME AND MAKE ME UNCOMFORTABLE.


AND SOMETIMES I EVEN THINK MAYBE THE WAY IT IS NOW IS FUN ENOUGH ALREADY.
YEAH,
BUT AYAKA, YOU SAID YOU WERE AFRAID OF...

BUT THAT GIRL'S MY RIVAL.

BUT NOW SHE'S FIGHTING ME, TELLS ME SHE LIKES HIM, AND WALKS THE TALK.

SHE WAS CRIPPLIN'LY SHY AND HAD TO HIDE IN CARDBOARD BOXES,

IT GIVES ME COURAGE AND SPIRIT THAT I CAN'T LOSE TO HER!

AND WHEN I SEE SOMETHIN' LIKE THAT, I JUST CAN'T KEEP MOVIN' AT A COW'S PACE ANYMORE.

I HAVE TO SHOW THAT I CAN CHANGE, TOO!

SO THAT'S WHY I CAN'T BE AFRAID, AND HAVE TO KEEP MOVIN' FORWARD!

RIGHT, TORAKO?

TORAKO...?

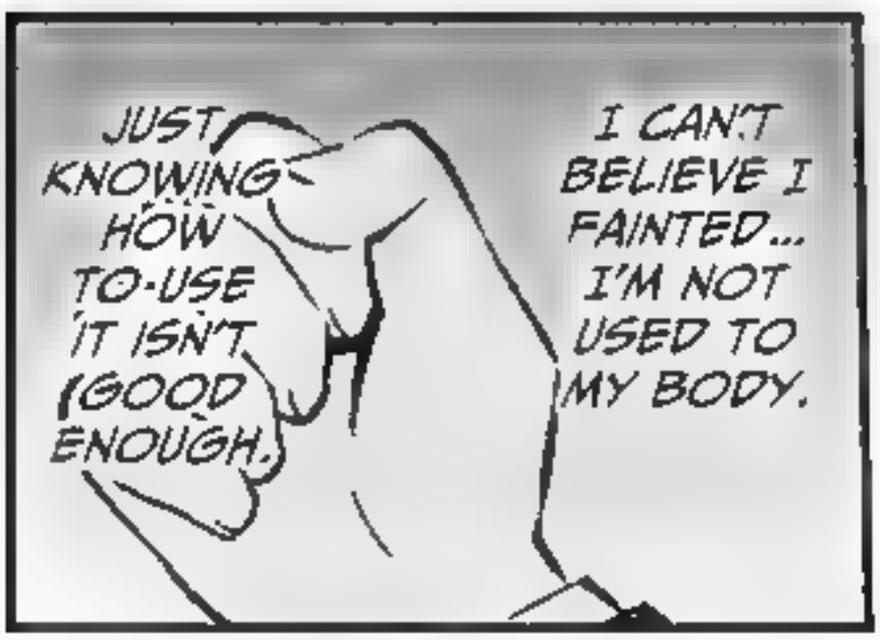
SO JUST WATCH ME!

FIRST, I NEED TO...

AYAKA.

NO MATTER... WHAT HAPPENS,

JUST KNOW ONE THING...


JUST KNOWING HOW TO USE IT ISN'T GOOD ENOUGH.
I CAN'T BELIEVE I FAINTED... I'M NOT USED TO MY BODY.

BUT I KNOW SOMEONE WHO CAN HELP ME...
IT'S A LITTLE LATE,

I LOVE YA,
AYAKA.

BUT, THERE WAS SOMETHING DIFFERENT ABOUT AYAKA TOO...

IT FELT THE SAME AS ALWAYS...

Was it just her hair?

I THOUGHT SHE JUST WANTED TO HANG OUT LIKE WE ALWAYS DO, BUT...

BUT WHAT DID SHE MEAN BY A DATE, IN THE END?

BUT TODAY SURE WAS FUN.

WAIT...

MORE LIKE... SHE WAS TRYING TO TELL ME SOME-THING...

I WANT YA TO LOOK OUT FOR SOMEONE ELSE...

THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT THE STUFF SHE'S BEEN SAYING LATELY THAT BOTHERS ME... WELL...

I WANT TO ALWAYS BE WITH YOU...

NOT FAIR...

IS SHE...?

OH, YOU'RE STILL AWAKE, MISS CAT?

NNNNGH...

KYOICHI SAID HE'S FINE, BUT I'M STILL WORRIED FOR HIS HEALTH...

WHEN IS HE COMING BACK...?

WHAT'S WRONG WITH ELOPING? ISN'T IT JUST SPEND NG THE NIGHT SOMEWHERE ELSE?

I HOPE THEY DIDN'T ELOPE LIKE HE DID WITH YOU.

YEAH, BUT I'M WORRIED ABOUT WHAT MY BROTHER AND MISS OX ARE UP TO...

ISN'T IT ALMOST TIME TO GO TO SLEEP, MIYAKO-CHAN?

...I DON'T KNOW, MAYBE BECAUSE IT'S A BAD HABIT...?

?

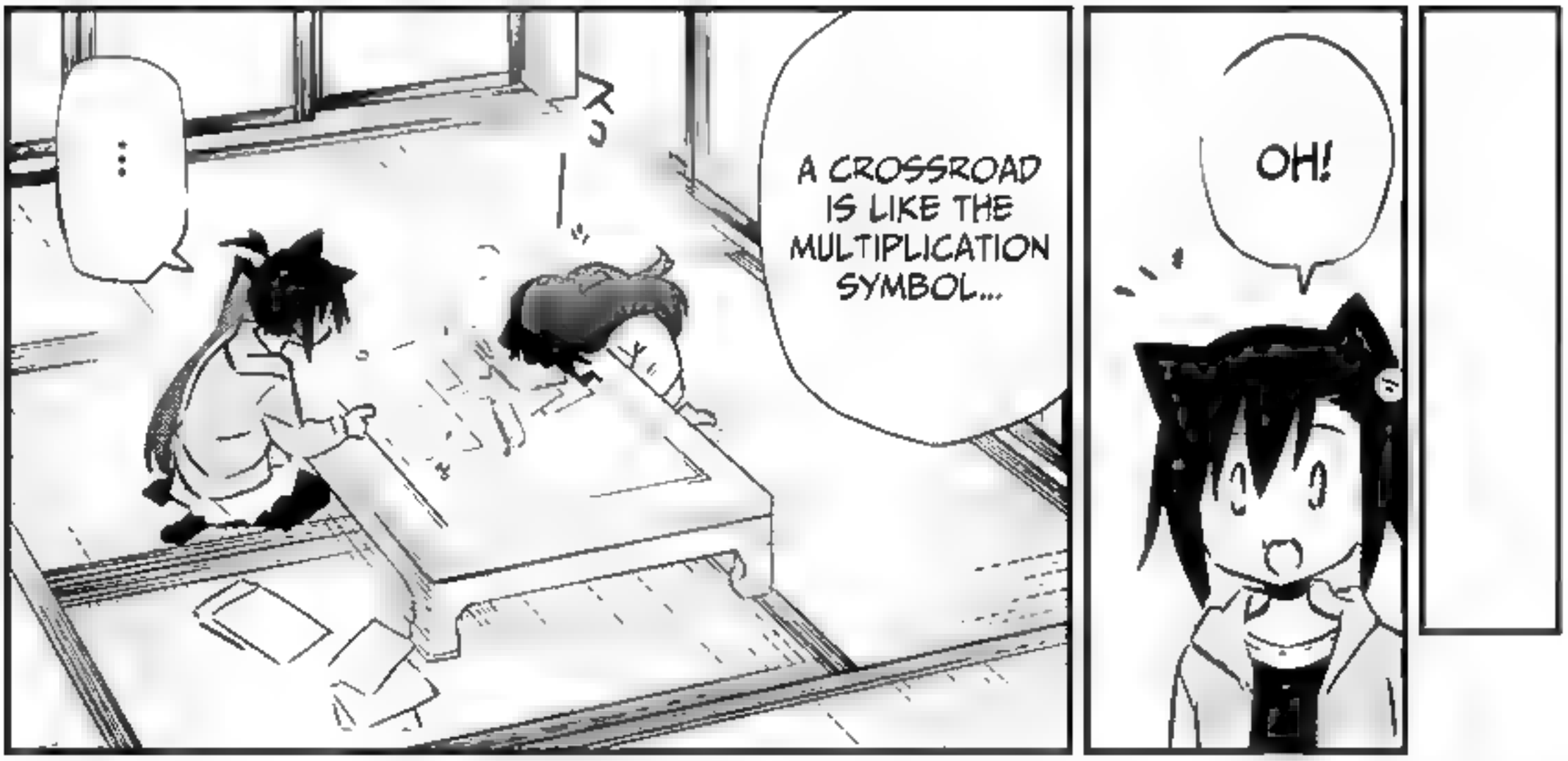
Hmmm

OH, ARE YOU SURE? LET ME GET YOU UP TO SPEED THEN...

D-DO YOU WANT ME TO HELP...?

NOT JUST THAT, THOUGH. THE STUFF ABOUT THE CROSSROADS AND SLASHING...

I FEEL LIKE THERE'S STILL SOMETHING MORE... BUT I DON'T KNOW...


…
スン
A CROSSROAD IS LIKE THE MULTIPLICATION SYMBOL...
OH!

HUH...?
SHE'S ASLEEP...
...THE CROSS ROADS ARE AN INTERSECTION, SO SPIRITUAL ENERGY SHOULD GATHER THERE I FEEL LIKE THAT'S GOT SOMETHING TO DO WITH IT...

WHAT...?
HAS... TWO THINGS...
I... DON'T...
COME TO THINK OF IT, AN ACTUAL OGRE...
WHAT... IS THIS...

HWAH!!!?

I DON'T... WANNA DIE...

NO.

THIS TERRIBLE FEELING...! IT'S THE SAME AS WHEN KYOICHI...?

...THIS IS SICKENING.

WHAT'S WRONG, TOYA-KUN?

IT'S WORSE!

AYAKA...?

THE SWORD MUST PIERCE THE HEART AT THE PLACE WHERE ILL OMEN EXISTS.

FIRST, A SITE OF ILL OMEN MUST BE CREATED.

SITE OF BEHEADING

NEKUNI MAIN HOUSE

THE FABRICATION OF THE SLASHER SYMBOL CREATED AN OMINOUS RUMOR, AND THE CROSSROADS BECAME A SITE OF ILL OMEN.

THREE REQUIREMENTS MUST BE MET TO CREATE A YOKAI.

THE RABBIT HAD ALREADY ENACTED MALEVOLENT DEEDS AT CROSSROADS BIEFOREHAND, SO THIS WAS COMPLETED QUICKLY.

DEFILE THE GODS, TAINTED AND BEFOULED.

YOKAI VARY IN KIND, BUT CREATING A YOKAI BASED ON THE SHADOW OF THE GODS IS THE SIMPLEST.

SECOND IS THE MATERIAL.

HUMANS WHO POSSESS THE POWER OF THE GODS, THOSE WHO SHARE A CONNECTION WITH THE TWELVE CLANS.

GODLIKE HUMAN BEINGS, IN OTHER WORDS,

AND LASTLY, THE LORE.

THE YOKAI CREATED BEGETS ITS FORM FROM THE IMAGE OF THE ORIGINAL BEING,

AND INFLUENCED BY THE MANNER IN WHICH IT WAS CREATED.

ITS FORM DRAWN FROM THE TIGER AND OX, THE TWO CLANS CLOSEST TO IT.

RAT
OX
TIGER
RABBIT
DRAGON
SNAKE
HORSE

THUS,

SACRIFICE THE TIGER AND OX AT THE CROSSROADS WHERE TWO PATHS INTERSECT.

THE OGRE CRAWLS OUT OF THE OGRE GATE,

RISE FROM YOUR SLUMBER.

YE WHOSE NAME IS FEAR ITSELF, THE ANCIENT YOKAI,

LET YOUR NAME BE HEARD ACROSS THE LANDS.

OGRE.

恨み来、恋、恨み恋。

ウラミコイ、コイ、ウラミコイ。

あとがき

6巻までやってきました。
他のキャラ視点が多めに描けて
描いてるほうも新鮮でした。
卯ノ崖の後日とか
まだ描き足りないですが
最終ページがあんな感じなので
ひとまず我慢します。
次巻もどうぞお楽しみに～

スペシャルサンクス

武田ルイ様　　担当Y本様
田部井悠記様
三崎祐輝様　　&読者の皆様方

恭一さんの事
負けませんよっ

…！

うんっ！

十二家

この先
ぬしを通すわけには
いかんのさ。

…そうか
朱華ちゃんに
何かしたのは
お前なんだな…！

かっこ

予告

こんな事
言いたくはないけれど
最悪の場合の為、
覚悟の為、
あえて言葉にするわ。
私たちは丑さんを、鬼を
やっつけなくちゃ
いけない…！

鬼門に位置する
丑と寅の方角に
形を成したもの

鬼とは
鬼門より
はい出るモノ

鬼×十二家

「恨み来、恋、恨み恋。」Uramikoi, Koi, Uramikoi. 7

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